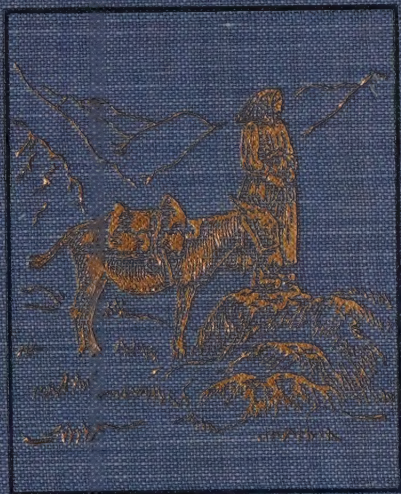


THINGS SEEN IN THE PYRENEES

1922



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THINGS SEEN IN THE PYRENEES



Photo Ford

Pan

THE BRIDGE OF ORTHEZ

This fortified bridge, with its red-roofed tower, was built across the Gave in the 12th and 14th centuries.

THINGS SEEN IN THE PYRENEES

FRENCH & SPANISH

A DESCRIPTION OF AN INTERESTING FRONTIER LAND, ITS
WONDERFUL SCENERY, ROMANTIC ASSOCIATIONS,
THE ATTRACTIONS OF ITS FASHIONABLE
RESORTS, & THE CHARMS OF
ITS MORE SECLUDED
RETREATS

BY

CAPTAIN LESLIE RICHARDSON

Officier d'Académie

AUTHOR OF "THINGS SEEN ON THE RIVIERA,"

"MOTOR CRUISING IN FRANCE,"

&c. &c.

WITH MANY ILLUSTRATIONS & MAP

London

Seeley, Service & Co. Limited

196 Shaftesbury Avenue

1928

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

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THE PYRENEES





Photo

Maurice Tassin

THE CIRQUE DE GAVARNIE

A shepherd is seen tending his flock by the Grande Cascade, considered by many to be the most impressive and beautiful feature in the Pyrenees.

Things Seen in the Pyrenees

CHAPTER I

THE CHARM OF THE PYRENEES

Topography—History—What to See and How to Travel —
What to Read

SNOW-CLAD mountains stretching from the emerald Atlantic to the sapphire Mediterranean, semi-tropical vegetation, great pine forests, southern sunshine, silver rivers, gushing waterfalls, and the romance of a frontier land are some of the features that, added to the Casinos and other attractions of fashionable resorts like Pau and Biarritz, spas and baths such as Luchon, Cauterets, Eaux Bonnes and Vernet make up the charm of the Pyrenees.

Hunting, shooting, fishing, yachting, golf, tennis and other sports and pastimes amid beautiful surroundings, with mountaineering, rock climbing and winter sports make an irresistible appeal to those in search of a congenial holiday. The walled city of Carcassonne, the fortified bridge of Orthez, the unique style of Toulouse, and Saint Bertrand de Comminges, are

The Charm of the Pyrenees

some of the treasures that reward the student of architecture, while the historian can follow the campaigns of Hannibal, Charlemagne and Wellington. Hotels equal to any in Europe, good roads and an excellent railway system make travel in the Pyrenees most agreeable. It is a pleasure to tramp over the mountains afoot, for than the Basques and Béarnais no more polite and courteous peasantry exists. Camping among the passes and valleys of the High Pyrenees one is able to live the simple life in a manner usually associated with the backwoods of Canada; and it will be news to many that there are still parts of the Spanish Pyrenees, especially in the vicinity of the Maladetta, that have never been mapped and explored in a scientific manner. It is in this very wildness that lies the charm of the Spanish Pyrenees, where one can jog along all day on mule-back without meeting even a goat herd. An English mountaineer, Charles Packe from Leicestershire, first revealed the beauties of the Spanish side of the great range in 1867. Now, thanks to the initiative of the late Prince of Monaco, the lovely Arazas Valley has been reserved as a Spanish National Park, and one is able to admire the flowers and animals of the Pyrenees in their natural state. The Pyrenees have, thus, this advantage over the Alps, that by crossing the range one finds oneself in almost another world, for although the great Spanish cities like Barcelona and Bilbao have become similar in character to any other commercial centres the Spanish country is still unspoilt,

The Charm of the Pyrenees

being more African in character than European, indeed the Spanish Pyrenees are more like the Atlas than the Alps.

In addition to this attraction of the romance of Spain the Pyrenees provide two types of climate, those of Western Europe and the Mediterranean. At the western extremity of the range one finds the great rollers of the Bay of Biscay meeting their death at the foot of mountains, clad in pine woods and shrouded in mist, a somewhat sunny edition of the West Highlands, while the Eastern Pyrenees, with cypress trees and olive groves, brown hills and sapphire sea, are in close resemblance to the climate and landscape of the western end of the French Riviera. The tallest mountains and most characteristic scenery will be found in the middle of the range, the great snowy mass of the Maladetta and Los Encantados.

One of the chief characteristics of the Pyrenean Range is the number of medicinal springs. There are believed to be over 550 of these springs of which under 200 are recommended by the faculty. Most of these springs are in French territory, the principal thermal stations being Ax-les-Thermes, Amelie-les-Bains, Salies de Béarn, Bagnères de Bigorre, Bagnères de Luchon, Barèges, Aulus, Cauterets, Saint Sauveur, Eaux Bonnes, Eaux Chaudes, &c. In Spain, Panticosa, Caldas and Ormaiztegui are the chief springs.

Four languages are spoken in the Pyrenees, Spanish, French, Basque and Catalan. The Basques and Catalans are two races as distinct as the climates of the Western and Eastern

The Charm of the Pyrenees

Pyrenees. Basques and Catalans are found on both sides of the Pyrenees which they ride astride. Politically the Pyrenees are administered by three governments, the French Republic, the Kingdom of Spain and the Republic of Andorra, though the latter is under the suzerainty of the President of the French Republic and a Spanish Bishop. In addition to the Basques and Catalans we find on the French side of the Central Pyrenees, the Béarnais, and over in Spain, the Aragonese. The Capital of the French Pyrenees is Toulouse, away down in the great plain of the Garonne, while Zaragoza, over in Aragon, is the Spanish capital. On both sides of the range where the valleys open out into the plains are towns, Bayonne, Pau, Tarbes, Saint Giron, Foix and Carcassonne in France, with Pamplona, Jaca, Huesca, Barbastro, Lèrida, Manresa, and Gerona in Spain.

Both the Spanish Basques and Spanish Catalans enjoy special political rights of which they are extremely proud and tenacious. The Basques with Bilbao as their capital, and the Catalans with the biggest city in Spain, Barcelona, as their chief town, are the great workers of Spain. The Catalans have a strong individuality, and more than a leaning towards home rule for Catalonia. This feeling does not exist among the Basques and Catalans of France who have become merged in the great French Republic, though the Basques emigrate in great numbers to the Argentine Republic, where they at once lose their individuality. Every year a number of the inhabitants of the Spanish Pyrenees cross the mountains to

The Charm of the Pyrenees

seek work in France, going as far afield as Bordeaux and Toulouse and the vineyards of Narbonne and Béziers.

Though lacking in the great lakes that are so pleasant a feature of the Alps, the Pyrenees have a number of rivers rushing to the sea, while there is a quantity of tiny lochs in the High Pyrenees. The Garonne and the Ebro, both rising in the Spanish Pyrenees, are the longest rivers. Though one can see the Atlantic from the source of the Ebro, in the Province of Asturias, this is the chief Pyrenean river flowing into the Mediterranean, being 466 miles in length. It drains practically the whole of the southern slopes of the Pyrenees and adds to the charm of Zaragoza. Several of its tributaries, the Cinca and the Nogueras, are of great beauty in the upper reaches. Unlike most rivers flowing into the Mediterranean these streams have water in them all the year round, as indeed have the Arga and the Ega. In France the Tech and the Aude, the latter of great beauty above Carcassonne, flow into the Mediterranean.

Rising in Spain, the Garonne is 616 miles in length, of which 270 are navigable. Its chief Pyrenean tributaries are the Ariège, the Gers and the Baisse. The second stream flowing into the Atlantic is the Adour, a river that played a prominent part in the Peninsular War, with its chief tributaries, the Gaves de Pau and Oloron, the Bidouze and the Nive. At Saint Jean-de-Luz, the Nivelle flows into the Bay of Biscay within a few miles of the frontier river the Bidassoa.

The Peak of Néthou or Aneto on the Maladetta,

The Charm of the Pyrenees

in Spain, is the highest point of the Pyrenean Range, 11,165 feet (Ben Nevis being 4406 feet). The highest mountain in French territory is the Vignemale, 10,820 feet. The Port d'Oo, 9845 feet, is the highest pass, the highest in French territory being the Tourmalet, 6960 feet. The Lac Glacé, 8760 feet, is the highest lake, Panticosa, 5410 feet, the highest thermal baths, and Gavarnie, 4415 feet, the highest village; the chapel de Héas, built in 1717, is the highest chapel at 5075 feet. The Republic of Andorra is 3540 feet up. The chief Winter Sports Hotels are at Font Romeu and Superbagnères, both at the same altitude, 5895 feet. Pau, the leading inland winter resort for hunting and motor drives, is only 620 feet above sea level.

The charm of travel is always increased amid scenes that have witnessed the making of history. As is usual on a frontier land like that of the Pyrenees one is able to trace the history of Europe and even of Africa from the earliest times to the present day. A mighty wall separating African Spain from European France the Pyrenees form one of the most historically interesting mountain ranges in the world. The chief episodes took place in the passes, which have been traversed by many of the world's most famous generals. And it is one of the most pleasant features of Pyrenean travel to visit the scenes of some of the mighty battles of old, especially when, in the case of the Black Prince and Wellington, the gallant deeds were wrought by natives of the British Isles.



Sindicato

de Iniciativa

A TYPICAL SCENE ON THE SPANISH SLOPES
OF THE PYRENEES.

From the tree, standing like a sentry over the pass, one looks south across the wide plains of Aragon towards the valley of the yellow Ebro.

The Charm of the Pyrenees

Both Hannibal and Cæsar led their armies over the Pérthus in the Eastern Pyrenees. Charlemagne, on the other hand, crossed at the western end, through the Roncevaux Pass in 778, when his rear guard, under Roland, was cut up by the Basques. This tragic event recorded in the *Chanson de Roland* has given rise to a number of quaint legends. In the Pass of Roncevaux one is shown a hole or natural archway in the rock, alleged to have been made by a kick from the Paladin. While near Gavarnie is a huge slice out of the mountain said to be due to a blow from Roland's trusty sword Durandal. The Black Prince on his way to re-instate Peter the Cruel passed through Roncevaux. And a number of watch towers were built at that period and served as strongholds in the fighting among the foothills of the Pyrenees. Bigorre and Gascony were given to the Black Prince in ransom for King John of France after the Battle of Poitiers. Froissart spent some time among the Pyrenees, mostly at Orthez, in search of "copy" for his chronicles, and in his quaint pages will be found many an account of border raids and deeds of chivalry in the passes of the Pyrenees. Henry IV, the popular Béarnais who was born at Pau, is one of the most interesting historical personalities of the Pyrenees. In 1659 was signed the Treaty of the Pyrenees after a series of conferences on the Isle of Pheasants in the river Bidassoa, between Cardinal Mazarin and Don Luis de Haro. The treaty led to the marriage of Louis XIV with the daughter of Philip IV, and gave France the

The Charm of the Pyrenees

Cerdagne and the Roussillon. The next event was the Peninsula War, which ended in the abdication of Napoleon on April 6th, 1814, though the Battle of Toulouse was fought in ignorance of this fact on April 10th–12th, the last fighting took place at Bayonne on April 14th.

Even to-day when Spain is reaping the commercial reward of her neutrality in the Great War a number of towns and villages of the Spanish Pyrenees are still suffering from the devastating effect of the Carlist Wars of 1830–40 and 1872–76. Except at San Sebastian and Barcelona the wanderer in the Spanish Pyrenees must be prepared to accept hotel accommodation he would scorn on the French side of the range.

What to see in order to obtain a general impression of the Pyrenees in a short time, depends a good deal on the beholder. In France, going from west to east, I would recommend Biarritz on a rough day with the great Atlantic rollers hurling themselves in a mass of foam on the Virgin's Rock. The view of the Rhune and Fuenterrabia from Hendaye, a drive through the green Basque country to Cambo. Next, the view of the range from the Boulevard des Pyrenees at Pau; Laruns on a market day, and a drive up the Val d'Ossau; over the Col d'Aubisque from Eaux Bonnes to Argelès, thence up to Cauterets; the Cirque de Gavarnie; Luchon and the view of the Maladetta from the Port de Venasque, a distant prospect of the Canigou, the Gorges of the Aude above Quillan, the walled city of Carcassonne, the Castle of Collioure.

The Charm of the Pyrenees

In Spain, places of charm and interest are Fuenterrabia, the fjord of Pasajes, San Sebastian, the coast to Bilbao, the road up from Panticosa to the frontier, the walls of Pamplona, Zaragoza, the Rambla at Barcelona, the Montserrat Monastery and mountains, Puigcerda and the Republic of Andorra (where, although a motor road has now been built, tobacco is still grown for smuggling purposes), Gerona and Manresa.

These are the chief places of interest contributing to a general impression of what constitutes the Pyrenees. There are two ways of seeing the Pyrenees, one is to set out on a tour, the other to make a considerable stay at some central spot and radiate in all directions to places of interest.

One usually approaches the Pyrenees from the French side proceeding to Bordeaux or Narbonne, according to which end of the range has been selected as a jumping-off ground. The traveller coming up from Spain, will have landed at Gibraltar, Lisbon, Santander, Bilbao or Barcelona. He will, in any case, choose either Barcelona, Bilbao, Burgos or San Sebastian as a starting point, and all of these towns have good rail connection with Madrid and have quite good hotels, especially Barcelona and San Sebastian.

Let us assume we are at Bordeaux. Having a few hours to spare we take a look at the town, before making the classic excursion to Arcachon. The railway station is a long way from the centre of the town but it is well worth going in to look at the Place des Quinconces laid out in 1818 with a fine monument to the Girondins in the middle.

The Charm of the Pyrenees

This was formerly the site of Vauban's Château Trompette. The Garonne is over 500 yards in width at Bordeaux, and the water front, extending for some three miles, is considered the finest in Europe. It should be viewed from the bridge, which is 270 feet longer than Waterloo Bridge and has seventeen arches. The great sweep of the quays, the cod schooners from the Grand Banks lying in the stream and the handsome eighteenth century houses give an impression of wealth and commercial solidity. For three hundred years Bordeaux was held by the English, being inherited through Henry II's marriage with Eleanor of Guienne in 1152. It was a favourite resort of the Black Prince, and it was at Bordeaux that his son, afterwards Richard II, was born. The Black Prince, amongst other things, improved the Cordouan Lighthouse at the entrance to the Gironde, for the guidance of the two hundred ships that sailed in convoy from England to Bordeaux in search of claret every year. In addition to the handsome square in front of the Theatre and the fine Cours de l'Intendance and Chapeau Rouge one should visit the Public Gardens, the Palais Gallien, the Church of St. Seurin and Saint Andrew's Cathedral.

Arcachon is the most popular resort of the Landes district. This is a stretch of pine forest and sand dunes lying between the Garonne and the Adour. It serves as an admirable foil to the snowy wall of the Pyrenees. A series of tiny lakes and lagoons is linked by streams running through the pine forests, making it possible to



Sindicato

THE SQUARE OF ALQUEZAR

de Iniciativa

This village is situated in the Province of Huesca in the Spanish Pyrenees. The quaint arcades and archways, the cobbled streets, the heavily barred windows and armorial bearings on the walls are typical of a Spanish hill village.

The Charm of the Pyrenees

travel by canoe right through this delightful district, camping out in the woods by the side of lake or stream.

Let us make a short journey of exploration through this district by motor car and canoe. We will motor down from Bordeaux and arrange for a canoe to take us out on Lake Lacanau, sleeping the night at Arcachon.

Once Bordeaux is left behind the road runs through pretty woodland scenery with open patches of vines and pastures. The Landes, which we are swiftly approaching, is one of the wildest parts of France. Formerly the Landes was a marsh in winter and a desert of sand in summer. Now, most of the marsh has been drained, and the sand dunes anchored with pine plantations. The pines produce a rich crop of resin every year, more remunerative than the sheep that used to roam about the marshes. Men with little ladders are to be seen in the forest busy collecting the resin; they are taking the place of the shepherds who were wont to wade through the marshes on stilts. One may still see them in Bordeaux, where they are used for advertising local fêtes. The stilts are called "shanks" in the local dialect and date from the English occupation of Aquitaine in the Middle Ages.

Along the wild inhospitable coast are steep sand-dunes. The bays and creeks that formerly cut into the coast are now walled off from the sea by these dunes and have been converted by nature into fresh water lakes. From north to

The Charm of the Pyrenees

south the principal lakes are Hourtin, Lacanau, Arcachon, Cazau and Biscarosse, finishing with the old, silted-up mouth of the Adour at Cap Breton. Only one of these lakes, the largest, Le Bassin d'Arcachon, has remained salt and communicates with the sea.

The road to the lake soon runs through the pine forest, here and there one overtakes carts drawn by mules with their heads through a curious yoke like a ladder. Little red pots to catch the resin hang on the trunks of the trees and the sticky fluid is seen trickling down from a wound. One begins to feel the mystery of the forest, looking down the glades the tree trunks are shrouded in purple mist. Very sandy is the soil, and soon on either side of the road there rise sand-dunes increasing in height as we proceed. We round a curve and through the trees catch the gleam of water, Lake Lacanau. While lunch is being prepared one climbs to the summit of a high embankment of dunes whence one looks across the great heaving bosom of the Bay of Biscay. Right and left stretch mile after mile of silver sands, and one sees that the name for this coast, *La Côte d'Argent*, is no idle catch phrase. Down shines the sun from a cloudless sky, and windless is the sea, yet in a monotonous, but magnificent procession, the great Biscay rollers crash ashore, running up the sands in lacy foam. With the exception of the entrance to Arcachon, which is best left alone in bad weather, this coast is now without a single harbour from the Gironde to the Adour.

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After lunch the canoe is launched and we paddle out across the lake. It is very hot. The sun beats down from the sky of brass, causing the placid waters of the lake to glitter like some diamond in a setting of emerald pines. Cattle stand beneath the trees, belly deep in the lake. On the bank nets are hanging up to dry on stakes. A jovial looking fellow in a blue basque cap comes out from a little wooden house for a chat and shows us his motor boat. Landing on the opposite side of the lake we scale a tall dune, with a rich carpet of undergrowth, heather, broom and arbutus. Underfoot are pine needles and fir cones gnawed by squirrels. From the summit one looks across miles of pine forest flowing away to the horizon in billows, changing like the ocean in the sunlight. Silent and desolate as the backwoods of Canada, the shores of Lake Lacanau are admirable for camping and we leave them with regret.

Arcachon is divided into two towns, *la ville d'hiver* and *la ville d'été*; the former is built on the sand-dunes amongst the pine woods, the latter along the shore. Both consist of red-roofed villas. Arcachon is a very popular yachting centre, races for craft of the various International Classes being held in the summer. One of the leading fishing ports of France, Arcachon possesses a fine fleet of steam trawlers and motor sardine smacks. These are of a peculiar build, being something like a big canoe. They are called *pinasses*, the origin of the English word pinnace. *Pinasse* is so called from the fact that it is built

The Charm of the Pyrenees

of pine planks, though some say that the boats were constructed from a design imported by basque mariners from Ping-Has in China in the fifteenth century.

Arcachon was the first fishing port in France to adopt the marine motor, and there are several makers of engines and ship builders on the shores of the bay. The *pinasses* were of great use to the French navy in the Dardanelles. Few coasts are more inhospitable and less suited to the needs of the 'longshore fisherman than that of the Landes. Violent and sudden onshore gales, mountainous seas and lack of shelter call for a good type of sea boat. Arcachon is renowned for its oysters, which are cultivated and tended with loving care by fish-wives in scarlet trousers and sea boots.

From Lamothe Junction the main line from Paris to Madrid runs across the Landes. Little red-roofed cottages, with bee-hives and ox-carts laden with barrels of resin, flocks of sheep in charge of men and women knitting, clad in sheep-skin coats, carts drawn by three mules abreast, *résiniers* in blue *bérets* emptying the little red pots of resin, and mile after mile of pine trees, their trunks enveloped in purple haze, these are the leading features of the country till Dax is reached.

Situated on the sedgy banks of the Adour, Dax has been a thermal resort since Roman days, knowing the heavy hand of Crassus and other emissaries of Cæsar. Its name is derived from *Aquae Augustae*, *Acqs*, *Dacqs*, till we simplify to Dax.

The Charm of the Pyrenees

So near the frontier Dax suffered from the Visigoths, Saracens and Normans, and was added to his other French possessions by Richard-the-Lion-Hearted. To-day Dax is the resort of rheumatic sufferers who seek relief in mud baths and natural geysers. Like Tarbes further in the mountains, Dax breeds sturdy horses, and one generally sees ponies belly deep in the flooded water meadows of the Adour valley.

From Dax one enters the Department of the *Basses Pyrénées*, either by continuing to Bayonne and the Basque country, or by proceeding up the valley of the Gave de Pau to Orthez, Pau and Béarn.

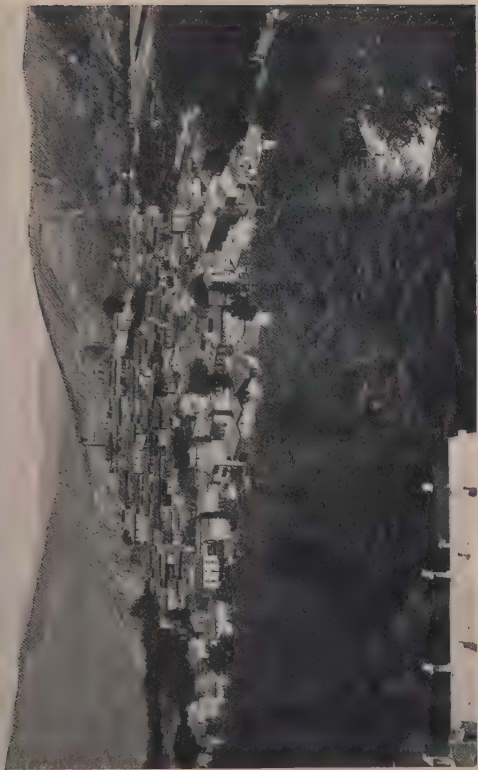
Sooner or later the traveller in France will find himself at Marseilles. Either he is returning from a season spent on the Riviera or in North Africa, or he has just landed from India with the pleasant prospect of a few months' leave before him. In the spring many folk coming home from the East seek a cooling-off ground before facing the climate of the British Isles. Landing at Marseilles the Eastern Pyrenees make a fascinating holiday ground.

Marseilles itself, the great metropolis of southern France, the capital of the Mediterranean, the cross roads where most voyages to the shiny East or ebony Africa have their genesis or termination, is a wonderful centre for the study of mankind. Nôtre Dame de la Garde, the Vieux Port beloved of Joseph Conrad, and the ever thronged Cannebière are three spots essential to an intelligent understanding of Marseilles.

The Charm of the Pyrenees

The road from Marseilles to the Eastern Pyrenees takes us through the picturesque town of Martigues, once, in the days of the painter Ziem, called the Venice of Provence. Though much modernised to make a canal, there are still many rows of quaint southern houses lining the quays. A pretty fleet of lateen sailed boats carries on fishing on the blue waters of a vast salt lagoon called the Etang de Berre. The new canal running through Martigues connects Marseilles with the North Sea, via the Rhone, Strasbourg, the Rhine, and Rotterdam. Across the great stony waste of the Crau, through Arles with its Roman theatre, over the swift Rhone past Saint Gilles, to the great southern city of Montpellier, icy in winter, Saharan in summer; along the shores of the sapphire Lagoon of Thau and on through the wine capital, Béziers, this dusty road takes us across Provence and the Languedoc to Narbonne. The railway, after leaving Arles, runs up the right bank of the Rhone to Tarascon, where it crosses to Béaucaire, carrying us through the old Roman city of Nîmes to Montpellier, and on through Frontignan of the sweet wine to Cette. A few hours watching the picturesque lateen fishing smacks from Cette breakwater are well spent, before running on between the Mediterranean and the Thau Lagoon through quaint Agde to Béziers and Narbonne. A busy centre of the wine trade like Béziers, Narbonne has really very little to interest the visitor except the cathedral of Saint Just dating from 1272.

From Narbonne one gains the Pyrenees either



Route d'Orléans

VERNET LES BAINS

This, the chief tourist resort of the Eastern Pyrenees, is a charming centre for those who wish to explore the Canigou. Neither too cold in winter nor too hot in summer, Vernet, though an all-the-year-round resort, is at its best in spring.

The Charm of the Pyrenees

by road or rail through Carcassonne in the *Aude*, or Perpignan in the *Pyrénées Orientales*. Both are well worth seeing, especially Carcassonne, and both are situated at the beginning of highways into the great mountain range. Not to have visited the walled city of Carcassonne, not to have seen the great snowy man of the Canigou before Vernet is not to have seen the Eastern Pyrenees.

I have frequently approached the Pyrenees from both Bordeaux and Marseilles, and I have yet to find a better means of exploring the chief beauty spots of the great range than by the admirable service of motor chars-à-bancs that cross France from sea to sea. The fine road called *La Route des Pyrénées* enables one to visit all the places of interest, and one can take advantage of good inns after the manner of the good old coaching days.

In this way I have frequently visited with a minimum of trouble and expense such places as Cambo, Eaux Bonnes, the Col d'Aubisque, Argelès, Cauterets, Gavarnie, Luz, Luchon, the Col de Portet d'Aspet, Ax-les-Thermes, Puymorens, Vernet les Bains and the blue waters of the Mediterranean at Cerbère.

In the same manner one may make a thorough exploration of the country of the Spanish Basques right along from Fuenterrabia through San Sebastian to Bilbao.

For travelling in the Spanish Pyrenees by mule track and camping among the high mountains I would advise the wayfarer who is ignorant of

The Charm of the Pyrenees

the language and rural customs of Spain to hire a guide and mounts either at Luchon, Gavarnie or Cauterets. The French guides are capital fellows and well accustomed to the requirements of British and American travellers. Bilingual they are equally at home in France and in Spain. Passet, of Gavarnie, was the first Pyrenean guide and has handed on the traditions of his master, Packe.

The motorist in his own car cannot do better than follow the itinerary of the railway motor chars-à-bancs, making such modifications as suit his taste.

Two modern methods of travel that have made considerable strides since the Great War eliminate the hotel problem. I allude to motor caravanning and motor yachting. The motor caravanner will find the hills trying in the Higher Pyrenees, though he will be delighted with the number of ideal camping sites in close proximity to running water. The motor yachtsman will encounter good harbours at the following places within easy motoring distance of the Pyrenees: Saint Jean-de-Luz, Pasajes, San Sebastian on the Atlantic shore. While Barcelona, Rosas Bay, Banyuls and Port Vendres are ports on the Mediterranean coast of the Pyrenees. Owners of small craft using the Canal du Midi, which crosses France from the Mediterranean at Cette to the Atlantic at Royan, via the Garonne, will find themselves within easy hail of the mountains at Carcassonne and Toulouse both of which possess good harbours.



Photo

AX-LES-THERMES

One of the chief characteristics of the Pyrénées is the number of medicinal springs, and Ax-les-Thermes is one of the principal stations.

Bulle

The Charm of the Pyrenees

The Sud Express from Paris to Madrid runs through Biarritz and San Sebastian, whilst an equally excellent Rapide takes one from Paris to Barcelona via Toulouse, Carcassonne and Perpignan. From Madrid two good express lines run up to the frontier, one through Miranda del Ebro to Irun and France; the other through Zaragoza to Barcelona.

Steamers from England call at Bordeaux and Santander, whilst Marseilles and Barcelona are in communication by sea with all parts of the world. Quite a pleasant way of visiting the Pyrenees is to travel by steamer from Plymouth to Bordeaux, explore the range by motor char-à-banc and pick up the steamer at Marseilles for the return voyage.

No small part of the charm of intelligent travel consists in the preliminary planning of the tour, just as one obtains a deal of satisfaction in reading about places one has already visited. Many of the books about the Pyrenees are out of print and difficult to obtain. As soon as continental travel became safe after the Napoleonic Wars a number of Englishmen flocked to the Pyrenees to witness the scene of Wellington's victories. They found the winter climate of Pau and the neighbourhood agreeable and began to explore the district. The Pau Fox Hounds were founded in 1847 and in the following year was published the first edition of Murray's Handbook dealing with the Pyrenees. In 1864 appeared the first French guide book, *Joanne's Itinéraires*, to be followed by a book on mountaineering in French by Count Henry

The Charm of the Pyrenees

Russell, *Les Grandes Ascensions des Pyrénées*. Count Henry Russell was one of the earliest Pyrenean enthusiasts; he rented the slopes of the Vignemale and built rest huts which he eventually presented to the French Alpine Club. Charles Packe published the first mountaineering *Guide to the Pyrenees* in 1867. The earliest works dealing with the Pyrenees, though not exactly guide books, were Ramond's *Observations dans les Pyrénées* (1789), and *Voyages au Mont Perdu* (1801). A second edition of Count Henry Russell's *Souvenirs d'un Montagnard* was published at Pau in 1908.

The following is a short list of books easily obtainable :

IN ENGLISH

Arthur Young's *Travels in France*.

Though not directly bearing on the Pyrenees both Ford's *Gatherings from Spain* and Borrow's *Bible in Spain* help one to understand travel off the beaten track in Spain.

The Pyrenees, by Hilaire Belloc (Methuen), is a useful work for the traveller who wishes to cross the Pyrenees into Spain on horseback.

Some chapters of Mr. Belloc's *Hills and the Sea* and *The Eye Witness* deal with his wanderings in the Pyrenees.

Some of the chapters of Edgar Wigram's *Northern Spain* (A. & C. Black) describe cycling in the Pyrenees.

Cities of Spain, by Edward Hutton (Methuen), contains some impressions of Fuenterrabia and Barcelona.

Fishing and Travel in Spain, by Walter M. Gallichan (Robinson).

A Book of the Pyrenees, by the Rev. S. Baring-Gould (Methuen). Historical.

Along the Pyrenees, by Paul Wilstach (Geoffrey Bles), published in 1925.

The Charm of the Pyrenees

Travels in the Pyrenees, by V. C. Scott O'Connor (John Long). An admirable description of the Eastern Pyrenees and Vernet.

The Adventurer in Spain, by S. R. Crockett. A capital book, half fact, half fiction, deals with the smugglers and Carlists of the Eastern and Central Pyrenees.

The Velvet Glove, by H. S. Merriman (Smith Elder), a romance of Zaragoza, the Spanish Pyrenees, and the Carlist Wars.

The South Bound Car, by Owen Llewellyn and Raven Hill, tells of the early days of motoring across the Pyrenees from France to Barcelona and home via Biarritz. (Methuen).

In *Deeds that Won the Empire*, by W. H. Fitchett, will be found admirable descriptions of some of the fighting in the Peninsular War (Smith Elder).

Wayfaring in France, by Edward Harrison Barker (Macmillan). The final chapters describe a walking tour through the Landes from Bordeaux down to Dax and the Adour.

IN FRENCH

Ramuntcho, by Pierre Loti, about the Basques.

Andorra, by Isabelle Sandy.

Lourdes, by Zola.

Les Foules de Lourdes, by Huysmans.

La Garonne, by Louis Barron, describes the course of the great river from its source in Spain to the sea.

Les Villes Mortes du Golfe de Lyon, by Charles Lenthéric, deals with Collioure, Banyuls, Port Vendre, &c.

Côtes et Ports Français de l'Océan, by Charles Lenthéric, begins with some chapters on the Basque coast and the Landes.

La Cité de Carcassonne, by Viollet-Le-Duc, a description of the walled city by the authority on mediæval architecture.

Froissart's Chronicles in either language contain quaint pages dealing with the days of the Black Prince.

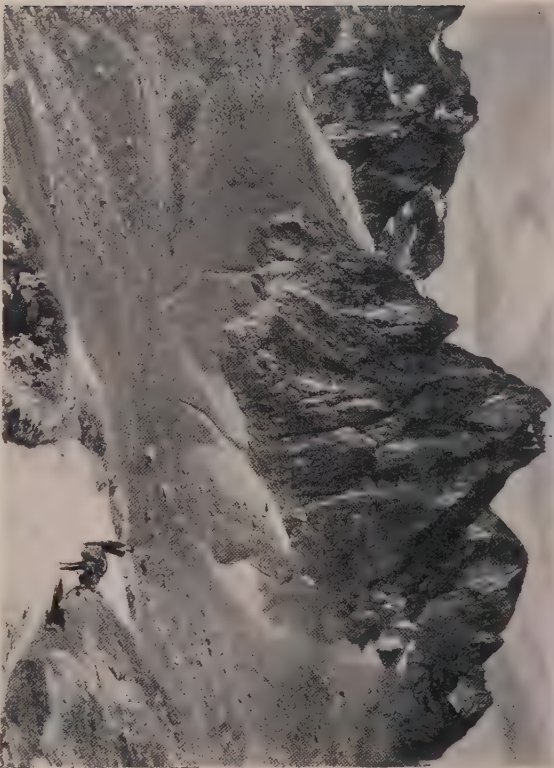
CHAPTER II

THE BASQUE COUNTRY

Bayonne—The Adour—Biarritz—Saint Jean-de-Luz—
Hendaye

THE new-comer to the Pyrenees will make his first acquaintance with the Basque Race at Bayonne. For some hours he has been travelling across the flat plain of the Landes, and if he has come by road he will have obtained his first sight of the snowy peaks of the great range merging into the silver clouds.

Situated at the confluence of the Adour and the Nive, Bayonne would be a considerable port were not the mouth of the Adour obstructed by a dangerous bar. From the Saint Esprit bridge over the Adour one obtains a good impression of the Basques, for here one may see them going to and fro about the market and other business that has brought them in from the country. The last time I sat sunning myself on Bayonne bridge I saw a band of dancers from the hills. All were dressed in white with scarlet sash and scarlet *boina* as the Basques call their *béret*. They were armed with flat sticks which each man tapped against that of his partner, all dancing around



Cie Alacantina

THE TOURMALET ROAD

This fine feat of engineering enables the motorist to obtain an idea of Pyrenean scenery and makes for easy communication between Luz, Barèges and Bagnères de Bigorre.

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the while to the beat of a drum, and shouting in their shrill tongue than which there is none older in Europe. Of great antiquity are the Basques; although their claim to direct descent from Noah is an exaggeration, there is no doubt that they were the first settlers of the Iberian Peninsula. Their language is said to be so difficult to acquire, that the very Devil gave it up in despair. They are intrepid seamen, and made many discoveries in the old days, besides being the first to establish a whale fishery. Just imagine, for a moment, the courage of the first whale fisher, his equipment being certainly of the most primitive, the first man to row out in an open boat and attack a whale in the heaving waters of the Bay of Biscay.

A Vauban citadel, ancient fortifications, a cathedral and semi-Spanish arcaded streets are the principal architectural features of Bayonne. It is a pleasant town, frequented for shopping purposes by the entire countryside even fashionable Biarritz partaking of afternoon tea or chocolate in the arcade. The centre of life in Bayonne is the Place d'Armes, whence one should stroll up the arcaded Rue du Pont Neuf turning off to visit the Château Vieux. It was not here, but at the Château de Marracq, burnt down in 1825, that Napoleon bullied Charles IV of Spain into abdicating, and forced his sons Ferdinand Prince of Asturias, Don Carlos, and Don Antonio to renounce their rights to the Spanish Throne.

A former historic meeting at Bayonne in 1565 between Catherine de Medici and her daughter

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Isabella queen of Philip II of Spain, is said to have decided the fate of the Huguenots, though whether the actual Massacre of Saint Bartholomew's Eve was planned at Bayonne is doubtful.

The Cathedral was built during the English occupation of Bayonne in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and one can still see the leopards of England, with the arms of the Talbots, and other knights. The cloisters dating from 1240 are very beautiful. So popular was the English occupation of Bayonne that the inhabitants resisted Dunois when he came to take the town for Charles VII in 1451. Bayonne boasts that it has never been conquered. It withstood Sir John Hope's siege until the end of the Peninsular War. Indeed, ignorant of the cessation of hostilities the garrison actually took prisoner Sir John Hope in a sally on April 14th.

Outside Bayonne are two cemeteries where lie buried British officers and men killed in the Peninsular War, one is entirely devoted to the Coldstream Guards.

Although some allege that it is derived from the old French word *bayou* meaning arrow, most authorities, including Larousse, claim that the bayonet was invented at Bayonne by Basque troops who drove the Spaniards off the Bayonette ridge of La Rhune by forcing the handles of their knives into the barrels of their muskets, in 1647. Bayonets were first used by British troops at the Battle of Killiecrankie in 1689. An improved form known as the ring bayonet was first used by the French at the Battle of Marsaglia in 1693,

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when Catinat defeated the Duke of Savoy. It was adapted by the British in the same year. The old pattern had to be unfixed before the musket was discharged as it consisted of a long dagger stuck down the muzzle of the weapon.

The so-called Bayonne ham really comes from a place called Bayona near Vigo in Spain, though the Spanish hams praised by Richard Ford hail from Montanches in Estremadura. Quite good hams are cured in Béarn and are sold at Pau.

The Saint Esprit Quarter across the river was a Ghetto for Spanish Jews. In the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella in 1492 the Inquisition turned its attention to the Jews, who were very powerful in Spain, even Talavera, Archbishop of Granada and confessor to the Queen, being of Jewish descent. The Inquisition exiled all Jews who would not accept the Catholic Faith, and most of these exiles halted for a short time at the first town of importance they found in France, Bayonne. The Jews who really founded this Ghetto were expelled from Spain during the reign of Philip IV, who, although a member of the blasphemous and obscene sect of the *Alumbrados*, encouraged *autos-da-fé* for the benefit of those Jews who had fled from Portugal into Spain. In 1790 the Jews of Spain, Portugal and the Comtat de Venaissin (the Papal enclave in France with Avignon as capital) were declared citizens of France. In 1868, the year of the flight of Queen Isabel II, the Jews were permitted to return to Spain, though many of the da Costas and Manassehs preferred to remain at Bayonne,

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for in France the Jews of Portugal had succeeded in getting the whip-hand of their rival tribes from Poland.

The Adour plays no small part in the life of Bayonne. Down at its mouth one finds the sturdy Basque fishermen working drift nets for salmon just inside the bar. Their roomy flat-bottomed punts are manned by a crew of two; one forward at the paddles, the other aft working the net and steering with an oar in the sculling notch. The salmon are caught on the edge of the surf, and the men seem to know within a foot where the rollers will break. Tremendous is the surf, and it is marvellous that the fishermen are not flung out of their boats. Clad in flat blue caps and black oilskins glistening with spray, they steal in and out of the danger zone with a cunning born of long experience. Excellent eating are the Adour salmon. The Adour being the only river of importance on this part of the French coast, it must be kept open for trade, hence dredging operations and repairs to the breakwater are always in progress, six months' work being often undone in a single tide. So bad is the bar that a signal tower has been erected, from which orders are given to the pilots bringing in the vessels. At night this tower shows a white light when it is safe to enter, and a red one in bad weather, or when vessels are coming out. A useful landmark is provided on this flat coast by the smoking chimneys of an iron foundry at Boucau. Although a few yachts are owned at Bayonne, the Adour is no river for



Office Français

THE ROCHER DE BASTA, BIARRITZ

From here one obtains magnificent views along the iron-bound coast to the Cantabrian Mountains across the Spanish Frontier. On the right the lighthouse on Cape St. Martin sends its warning beams each night across the storm-tossed waters of the Bay of Biscay.

du Tourisme

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pleasure, as the rusty ribs of a Norwegian steamer on the bar can testify. The bridging of the Adour (February, 1814) was one of the most heroic acts of the Peninsular War. Wellington's advance was checked by the Adour, for the only bridge was within the town of Bayonne, which was in the hands of Soult. It was determined to construct a bridge of boats, and the Navy undertook to collect and tow into the river a sufficient number of local craft, small *chasse-marées*. On the morning of February 24th—the day agreed upon, a fierce gale broke upon the coast, and mountainous breakers were thundering upon the bar. The Navy, however, having promised its assistance to the military authorities, had no idea of going back upon its word, and, to the horror of the troops assembled on the shore, the flotilla appeared off the river's mouth, and, the channel being unknown, ran the gauntlet of the bar. Although eight of the little craft were lost in the attempt, thirty-six won through to form a bridge and permit of Wellington's triumph at Orthez. A wonderful sight to behold the *chasse-marées*, led by the boats of the men-of-war, driving in on the top of the rollers! I saw just such a gale at the mouth of the Adour in March, and agree with Napier that it was "a stupendous undertaking, which will always rank among the prodigies of war."

If you examine a chart of this coast you will see a deep ditch running off opposite Cap Breton to the north of Bayonne. This was the original bed of the Adour until its mouth was blocked by

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sand-banks heaped up by a series of great gales at the end of the fourteenth century. For two hundred years the Adour then met the sea at Vieux Boucau. Then the inhabitants of Bayonne decided that life without a navigable river had become intolerable. Therefore, under the supervision of one Louis de Foix, a clever engineer, a channel was cut through the dunes, and, with the aid of a high tide, the river was stolen from its bed. But their sin found them out, and a pretty penny do the Bayonnais spend every year upon the upkeep of their port ; there is even talk of restoring the river to its original bed at Cap Breton. This was an important harbour in the Middle Ages, for the seamen of Cap Breton not only discovered the Canadian island of that name, but carried on an extensive whale fishery in the Bay of Biscay. To-day it is a dreamy little place, beloved of poets and painters. It produces a *tord-boyau* white wine, but its oysters are hard to beat.

At Bayonne one has an opportunity of witnessing what is called a *Course Landaise*, a bloodless bullfight. The bull ring, open to the air, seats ten thousand spectators. When the performers have made their triumphal entry and marched round the ring, the bull, in reality a cow, enters, and the performance begins. At once taking the offensive the cow charges an *écarteur* who gracefully evades her. Then, three *sauteurs* with jumping poles vault over the cow, one after the other. Some of the cows are led on long ropes, so that they can be pulled off before having time

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to gore any *écarteur* who should be sufficiently unskilful to get knocked down by the charging animal; it is also usual to pad its horns. The last time I saw one of these entertainments, only three cows appeared loose. During the interval, a cow with padded horns was placed at the disposal of amateurs. This was the most amusing part of the whole show, for several young men, wishing to show off before their lady friends, were knocked down and well mauled by the cow. At the end of the performance, cow-baiting was carried on by children. In these *Courses Landaises* no horses are used, nor is the cow put to death, though a man who is not very agile, and a fast runner, must accept the risk of breaking a rib or two, and I have seen an *écarteur* carried off on a stretcher, maimed for life.

Created to please the whim of an Empress, Biarritz is one of the most fashionable pleasure resorts in the world. In 1838 when Spain was in the throes of the Carlist War a number of Spaniards frequented the fishing village of Biarritz for sea bathing. Amongst them was Eugenie de Montijo, Countess de Theba, the beautiful daughter of a Spanish grandee, who on January 30th, 1853, married Napoleon III, Emperor of the French. Delighted at the wild rocky coast and pretty Basque country, the Empress re-visited Biarritz in 1854, with the Emperor, and in the following year built the Villa Eugenie. Since this date Biarritz has never looked back. The decayed whaling station, inhabited until the fifties by a couple of thousand

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Basque fishermen, now receives the visit of half a million tourists every year. In 1889 the visit of Queen Victoria brought Biarritz into vogue with British sun-seekers and the Basque resort became a tradition. It was in high favour with King Edward VII, and it was at Biarritz in 1906 that King Alphonso XIII of Spain announced his betrothal to Princess Ena of Battenberg. This set the seal of fashion on Biarritz for all time.

Though a charming resort in all seasons Biarritz finds favour with British visitors and residents in winter and spring, with Parisians in summer, and with Spaniards and South Americans in autumn. The so-called summer and autumn season is at its height in September, when fashionable cosmopolitan gamblers flock down from Deauville after the Grand Prix. The height of the English season is round about Easter, after Carnival, which usually sounds the death knell of the Riviera season.

With hunting, polo, golf, and tennis amid beautiful surroundings Biarritz makes a special appeal to sportsmen of all nations. The Casino is famous, those who saw it when King Edward was staying in Biarritz will never forget the gathering of beautiful women in wonderful gowns, accompanied by well-groomed and distinguished men from all over the world, grouped about the baccara tables. I once saw a member of His Majesty's Government walk out of the Casino in the "wee smaa' hours" with, under his arm, literally a hat-full of gold. But one can gamble anywhere, it is the sunshine and scenery



Route d'Orléans

THE TWIN ROCKS OF HENDAYE

This French frontier town on the shores of the storm-tossed Bay of Biscay has admirable sands and unrivalled bathing.

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that make Biarritz one of the world's playgrounds. Of all the storm flogged reefs and islets of this iron-bound coast the Virgin's Rock is the best known. Here, in stormy weather, when the mountainous seas of the Atlantic come rolling in across the tumultuous Bay of Biscay, crowds stand for hours, in spite of the drenching spray, spellbound at the spectacle of the breaking waves. As the steep seas hurl themselves against the reef they shoot up over the rock covering everything in a great fan-shaped column of water. The rock is joined to the mainland by a bridge, making a delightful promenade for the lounge in calm weather.

Though trees are difficult to grow so near the Atlantic there are many charming walks and drives across the heaths and moor, especially in early summer when all is gay with wild flowers. But the chief attraction is the number of rock-bound coves and sandy creeks. Above all, one enjoys a vast panorama of sea and sky. To the north lie the green pine forests across the Adour, while southward the view is bounded by the wild peaks of the Cantabrian Mountains radiating the romance of sunny Spain.

Biarritz Harbour, planned by Napoleon III, has never been completed. The present work is a maze-like structure only to be used by small craft under oars, or power. It is formed of isolated rocks connected by walls of masonry, and consists of three small basins leading out of each other, the last having a gate and being used as a floating dock. Sufficient for the needs of the

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fishermen and pilots, it should be shunned by yachts. Like Cap Breton, it was a whaling station in the Middle Ages, and the bishops of Bayonne batted on a tithe of its revenues. One day the whales disappeared, and with them the bishops' tithe, nor did the prosperity of Biarritz revive until its "discovery" by the Empress Eugenie. Few people take the Biarritz fishermen seriously, and I used to think they were only "supers" supplied by the municipality to enhance the local colour. One day, however, I heard fishwives crying sardines through the town in shrill Basque. Down I ran to the tiny harbour. Huge green combers were rolling in from the Bay of Biscay, till, meeting the brown rocks, they divided into fans of white spray. A black dot on the horizon materialised into a steam launch. Outside the ranks of the breakers she hesitated. A considerable crowd having assembled by this time, I learned that the launch had put out early that morning against the advice of the weather-wise. The sardines I had heard offered for sale had been landed by a boat that had hurried home upon the appearance of bad weather. The skipper of the launch was an intrepid helmsman, and was expected to get through safely, although a boat that had cut things too fine the previous year had been capsized and a man drowned. Waiting for a smooth, the skipper ran into the breakers, where he shut off steam and rode in, triumphant, upon the crest of a wave. Shooting through the narrow entrance, he threaded the maze into the outer basin. The sardines were handed up in

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baskets. One of the crew of seven, clad in a close-fitting *béret*, blue trousers and jersey, and *sabots* with oilskin tops, took a hunch of bread from a dry spot between the whistle and the funnel and complacently ate his supper. A handcart of coal bricks was pushed down, the hose turned on, and preparations made for the morrow's fishing. Pearly clouds stole along the coast from Spain, wrapping the Pyrenees in the mystery of night, and with the surf booming in my ears like siege guns, I turned home, having witnessed the finest piece of seamanship I ever saw.

Some forty feet in length are the steam launches, decked over, with a hatch fore and aft. They are not fishermen-owned, but worked on the share system. Very prosperous are the fishers of Biarritz, most of them only going to sea when they have nothing better to do. There are many rowing boats something after the style of the old Deal galley punts, but carvel built, with a canoe stern. Few sailing craft are seen; though the rowing *lanchas* carry sail, they are incapable of beating to windward. Most of these boats are built in Spain, and carry dorys in nests. The chief fishery is for anchovies and sardines, which are taken all the year round in seines and drift-nets. At St. Jean-de-Luz and Hendaye tinning factories have been established. A few years ago a party of Basque fishermen was sent to Brittany by the State to teach the Bretons how to work the big seines, but the latter would have none of these alien innovations, and were far from cordial

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in their reception of the Basques, who returned home to introduce the use of rogue and blue nets on their coast.

A coast road with magnificent vistas of sea and mountains runs southward from Biarritz past the delightful little bathing resort of Bidart and Guéthary to Saint Jean-de-Luz. At Bidart one finds a sixteenth century church and the quaint chapel of Urouca, while the cliffs and rocky crags contribute to the beauty of the little place.

Guéthary is quite a favourite resort with folk who prefer the good things that Dame Nature has to offer rather than the worldly attractions of Biarritz. The Basque fishermen busy about their long-boats hauled up on the slip present a picture that few painters can resist.

Saint Jean-de-Luz is one of the resorts most in vogue with the outdoor Englishman. It is an extremely pretty little town at the foot of the Pyrenees, on a lovely sandy bay, protected by a mole on which break mountainous seas. A fierce tide runs through a narrow entrance between stone piers, leading to the inner harbour, which dries out, with the exception of a ditch which is kept dredged out for the use of torpedo craft.

Yachts of any size using Saint Jean-de-Luz lie off in the open roadstead under the lee of the breakwater. Here, one often finds quite a fleet of vessels rolling at the moorings waiting for the weather to moderate and allow them to cross the bar of the Adour and proceed up to Bayonne.

Golf, fishing, shooting, boating and mountain

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rambles are among the many attractions of Saint Jean-de-Luz. In many an old guide-book one reads hair-raising tales about the water supply, or rather the lack of water at Saint Jean-de-Luz. This is now quite a thing of the past, a flow of excellent water being supplied from springs up on the Rhune. Like most frontier towns Saint Jean-de-Luz has known the clash of arms, being burnt down by the Spaniards in 1558, and occupied by them in the middle of the seventeenth century. A few years later the town was the centre of the festivities in connection with the marriage of "Le Roi Soleil" with the Infanta Maria-Teresa, which took place at Saint Jean-de-Luz on June 9th, 1660. The hardy Basque sailors of Saint Jean-de-Luz were the first to discover the cod fishery on the Grand Banks of Newfoundland, and it was a sore blow to them when France ceded Newfoundland to England by the Treaty of Utrecht, April 11th, 1713. In 1627, a fleet of eighty vessels was dispatched from Saint Jean-de-Luz to succour the Isle of Ré, blockaded by Buckingham.

The River Nivelle, rising in Spain, flows into the sea at Saint Jean-de-Luz, some five miles of tidal water make it a pleasant dinghy sail up to the little white Basque town of Ascain. The river runs through water meadows, an arcadia given up to placid flocks and herds in charge of little bare-legged shepherdesses. The woods on the neighbouring uplands are, in season, the haunt of woodcock, nor are the upper waters of the Nivelle devoid of small trout. At the head

The Basque Country

of the tideway are the charming houses, orchards and gardens of Ascaïn leading one on to climb the Rhune.

One is still shown, in Saint Jean-de-Luz, the houses occupied by Louis XIV and the Infanta and the church where they were married. The Iron Duke was billeted at number 12 in the Rue Mazarin. Tennis and croquet provide amusement for those who do not play golf. The undulating course abounds in natural hazards while the views of sea and mountain are very beautiful. When one remembers the excellent bathing and the Pergola Casino it is not difficult to understand why so many people who came for a short visit to an hotel have bought land and built themselves comfortable villas.

In the winter the local sardine fleet is re-inforced by the advent of Breton fishermen clad in picturesque overalls of blue or brick red, these men are experts from the great fishing ports in Finistère, Concarneau and Douarnenez, where sardines were first canned at the beginning of the last century after the method invented by Appert, Napoleon's famous Quartermaster-General. The sardine nets are as fine as lace and, dyed cornflower blue, they give the impression of a cloud of cigarette smoke when hoisted up to dry in the evening breeze. Sardines are caught all along the Atlantic coast from Portugal to Brest. The difference between good and bad sardines is not the fault of the innocent fish but lies in the quality of the oil in which they are canned, the difference between Lucca and cotton-seed oil.



BAYONNE CASTLE

The towers date from the 14th and 15th centuries.

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The wives of the Breton fishermen in their pretty white caps follow their husbands south to Saint Jean-de-Luz where they are employed as overseers in the canning factories, for they have many cunning dodges for drying and curing the delicate little fish.

Across the Nivelle are the suburbs of Ciboure and Socoa, the latter well worth a visit on account of the magnificent panorama to be enjoyed from the Signal Station. At Hendaye, the frontier, one finds admirable sands where bathing is unrivalled and the grand view across the Bidassoa to the mellow walls of Fuenterrabia is as Spanish as anything in Spain.

CHAPTER III

THE BASQUE COUNTRY (*continued*)

Cambo and the Nive—The Pas de Roland—Sare—Ascain
—St. Jean-Pied-de-Port and the Labourd—The Soule
—Mauleon and Tardets—Oloron and the Val d'Aspe.

A GOOD deal of the pretty Basque country can be seen in day outings from Biarritz, Bayonne, or Saint Jean-de-Luz with the help of a reliable car and a stout ashplant. Few places outside the French Riviera are better provided with motor chars-à-bancs than Biarritz, and the traveller who is without a car of his own can safely place himself in the hands of a good excursion bureau, though, to many people, half the fun of getting to a place is in the getting there in their own car. One of the best long drives is from Biarritz to Pamplona in Spain through the Roncesvalles Pass, returning to France through Bilbao and along the Spanish Corniche to San Sebastian.

Let us motor out of Cambo and see something of this beautiful land of the Basques. The road follows the river Nive, tidal as far as Ustaritz, and navigable for canoes up to Saint Jean-Pied-de-Port for those who do not mind numerous

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portages at mills. From Bayonne to Saint Jean-Pied-de-Port the river winds for 55 kilometres, salmon are found between Cambo and Bayonne, and trout between Saint Jean-Pied-de-Port and Cambo. At once, one is charmed with the flat, red-roofed farms, the patient oxen, yoked to quaint, creaking carts, with skins on their heads and coats embroidered with their owner's name. The Basque peasants walk in front of the oxen guiding them with that instrument, the *makhila*, goad or walking stick according to the necessity of the moment. Here and there are red and white farmsteads dotted among the green uplands. None too wide are the winding roads, especially when one encounters one of the Basque conveyances drawn by three horses or mules harnessed abreast. Down among the foothills one finds boys and girls with brown bare legs in charge of the flocks, but higher up in the passes and on the mountain slopes, snow storms and blizzards, eagles, and wolves make the tending of sheep work for men. Outside Ustaritz one finds a number of big, well-built villas, these are the houses of Basques who have returned to their native land with their pockets well lined with United States dollars and Argentine pesos. The former capital of the district, situated between the Pyrenees, the sea and the Adour, called the Labourd, Ustaritz is a pleasant village on the banks of the silver Nive. Between Ustaritz and Cambo, crowning a wooded hill, stands the villa Arnaga, where Edmond Rostand (1868-1918) wrote his farmyard study *Chanticleer*. Apart

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from green woods and rolling downs Cambo has little to offer but an ancient street, delightful views, a church in the Basque style, two sulphur springs and a couple of chocolate factories. In common with all Basque villages Cambo has a pelota court or *fronton*. Pelota is a game played in a court with a buttress after the manner of "fives," the players wear a sort of glove. A curved wicker instrument, half bat, half racket, called a *chistera*, somewhat similar to the basket-work cover London door-keepers once used to hold over the wheels of hansom cabs to protect women's skirts from the muddy wheels in those pre-taxi days when women wore skirts in proportion to their hair. It is a very good game, and caused much interest when played in London. The best players go to South America where they earn large sums of money, for the betting on pelota is fabulous. In Spain it is usual to dispense with the *chistera* and play with the bare hand.

Our Le Pas de Roland road runs on through the ancient village of Itxassou, typical of the Basque country, and takes us within a short walk of the natural arch that is called *le Pas de Roland*. Though the torrent flows through an imposing gorge one is somewhat disappointed with the natural arch which is dwarfed by the height of the mountains. Higher up, the Nive torrent flows through a pretty wooded valley called Laxia. From the *Pas de Roland*, wondering at the size of the Paladin's foot, for the natural arch was the result of his kick when endeavouring to escape from the Basques, one motors to Sare,

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passing, on the way, many ox-carts, and market women perched high on donkeys and busy knitting. One is kept well aware of the vicinity of the Spanish frontier by the presence of innumerable *douaniers* who keep bobbing up when least expected, for smuggling is still carried out on a big scale across the Pyrenees. Through well-wooded country with oaks to remind us of the sacred tree of Guernica over in Spain, where the Basques met in national conclave, we come to Espelette. Here a considerable market is in progress, which accounts for the number of old ladies we have passed on donkeys. In the shadow of the picturesque old Basque houses farm folk are busy bargaining over pigs, calves, colts and other live stock. Like their pleasant, well set-up masters the animals of the Basque country are clean and sturdy, and one feels that, here, one is in a land of health and happiness. Near the little village of Sare are some curious caves. From Sare, we climb a winding road over the Col-de-Saint-Ignace to Ascaïn with views of snow-capped mountains and waterfalls flowing down their sides after a recent shower. The Rhune is a famous hill, visible from all over the Basques country; it is easily climbed from Ascaïn. Another Basque mountain rejoices in the appalling name of Abaracacobarria (each syllable is pronounced). It was at Ascaïn, with a quaint square church tower at the head of the tideway of the Nivelle, that Pierre Loti wrote his novel of the Basque smugglers, *Ramuntcho*. From Ascaïn one can run down the valley of the Nivelle to Saint

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Jean-de-Luz, returning to Biarritz by the coast road through Guéthary as night steals down from the Rhune to cloak the broad Atlantic. Instead of returning to Biarritz, we might have carried on up the Pamplona road to Saint Jean-Pied-de-Port, the old capital of Lower Navarre, a rail-head, and a charming relic of the Middle Ages. Ever since Roman times Saint Jean-Pied-de-Port has been a base for armies crossing to and from Spain over the Roncesvalles Pass, though the present town was founded by King Garcia of Navarre in the twelfth century. The ancient town where Charlemagne halted is higher up the Nive towards Spain. Arneguy is the last French village, where one crosses the Nive and finds oneself in Spain. Beyond the village of Valcarlos in a wooded gorge lies Roncesvalles, called in French Roncevaux and Orhia in Basque. A Convent with a great square tower was erected here by the Knights Hospitallers in 1130. Still considered a very holy place under the direct protection of the Pope and the King of Spain, it ranks only after Jerusalem and Saint James of Compostella. Amongst the relics are chains from the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa when, on July 16th, 1212, Alfonso VIII defeated the Almohades under Mahommed-El-Nasir. A slipper which really belonged to Francis I of France is alleged to have been worn by Archbishop Turpin, Roland's is also shown. It was on August 15th, 778, that Roland, Warden of the Marshes of Brittany, in command of Charlemagne's rearguard, was cut off by the Basques,

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who rolled rocks down from the mountain tops and wiped out twelve Peers of the Empire as well as killing Roland the Paladin. The earliest authentic text of the *Chanson de Roland* is one of the greatest treasures of the Bodleian Library at Oxford, it was sung at the Battle of Hastings. The Pass of Roncesvalles was crossed by the Black Prince in February 1367, before he helped Peter the Cruel of Spain to defeat the French under Henry of Trastamara and Bertrand du Guesclin; Chandos, Sir Hugh Calverly at the head of a body of free companions, Sir William Felton, John of Gaunt, and James king of Majorca rode in the suite of the Black Prince. It was at the Battle of Navaretta that Bertrand du Guesclin was taken prisoner and held to ransom at Bordeaux by the Black Prince. After Jourdan's disaster at Vitoria King Joseph escaped over this same pass into France. And on July 25th, 1813, Roncesvalles saw, in one of the fiercest combats of the Peninsular War, one of the turning points in the World's History. After his victory at Vitoria, Wellington found himself confronted with the great barrier of the Pyrenees on his front, while on either flank lay San Sebastian and Pamplona, strong fortresses in French hands. Alarmed and wounded in pride at the flight of his brother Joseph after Vitoria, Napoleon ordered his most trusted marshal, Soult, back to Spain to endeavour to check Wellington's advance into France. Soult made a dash over Roncesvalles and gave the British army an autumn of stiff fighting among

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the snowy crags and peaks of the Pyrenees, for Soult was a dogged soldier, though unequal to Wellington in tactics and strategy. Nicolas Soult, Duke of Dalmatia, Marshal of France, was born in 1769 at Saint Amand-La-Bastide in the department of the Tarn, no great distance from the Pyrenees. Until the Battle of Marengo Soult fought under Massena, but he proved so efficient in organising armaments for the invasion of England that Napoleon included him in his first batch of marshals. He was unpopular until publicly thanked after Austerlitz. Henceforth it was always Soult who played "the leads" in Napoleon's absence. It was Soult who failed to drive the British Army into the sea after Moore's retreat on Corunna. It was Soult who failed to make good in Andalucia, where for three years he raised the whole of the population against him by his studied cruelty and looting of pictures and art treasures. In 1813 he was withdrawn from Spain to replace Marshal Bessières in Germany, but after the defeat of Jourdan, Napoleon sent him flying south to the Pyrenees. Wellington always proved more than a match for Soult, though the latter was one of the few marshals that survived Waterloo, for after a short banishment he served Louis Philippe as Minister for War and Foreign Affairs until the Revolution of 1848; he died in 1851.

This was the man who fought his way over the Pyrenees to within sight of Pamplona, but was driven back to France without relieving it. It was a question of sheer pluck, endurance, and



Photo

LORDAT CASTLE

A 13th-century stronghold near Ussat-les-Bains in the Ariège.

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hard fighting, a primitive trial of strength among the snowy peaks, a series of hammer-and-tongs combats 5000 feet up in the Pyrenees. Finally, on a wild night, October 7th, in torrents of rain, Wellington forced a passage across the Bidassoa, and in the morning the green jackets, Colbourne's Brigade and the Portuguese carried the Bayonette Ridge. A month later, the Rhune, which Soult had been fortifying for three months, was taken on November 10th after three hours' stupendous fighting.

The Baztan is another interesting Basque valley. One can go over the Col de Maya, which also saw fierce fighting during the Peninsular War, and down through Elizondo into Spanish Navarre. To the eastward of the Roncesvalles Pass lies the Soule valley. Here we visit Mauléon in a green valley mentioned by Pliny; higher up is the village of Tardets. From Mauléon one may proceed by road or rail over into Béarn. Oloron, at the junction of the Gaves d'Aspe and d'Ossau, was a bishopric until the French Revolution, it has some picturesque old houses and a fine view of the Pic d'Anie (8215 feet) from the bridge. This Pic d'Anie is the first really high mountain after leaving the Atlantic and forms the eastern extremity of the Basque Country. From Oloron a road leads along the banks of the Gave d'Aspe through the green valley of Bedous over the Somport and down, past Jaca, to the valley of the Ebro and Zaragoza. Urdos is the last town on the French side. Somport is derived from *summus portus*, it has

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played a smaller part in history than the Pass of Roncesvalles, being higher, 5380 feet, against the 3230 feet of Roncesvalles. However, it was over the Somport that Abd-er-Rahman led his army in 732. Thanks to Napoleon III the road over the Somport is one of the pleasantest motor roads into Spain, following the River Aragon down through Canfranc to Jaca. From Urdos one can climb over from the Somport to the Portalet road and Gabas, either by way of the Col de Bious, the Col d'Aas or the Col des Moines, the latter being the highest.

It will be seen that the Basque country is a very charming land, which one may divide into three, the coast with sardine fishers on the rocky shores of the Bay of Biscay, the green fields and oak woods of the foot-hills about Cambo, and the silver Gaves or mountain streams, the waterfalls, pine forests and craggy passes of the Pyrenees. Wherever one goes in the Basque country one is sure of finding a fitting reward for one's trouble in the beauty of the scenery and the old-world courtesy of the rugged peasantry.

CHAPTER IV

BÉARN

Béarn—Orthez—Pau—Laruns—The Val d'Ossau—
Eaux Chaudes—Eaux Bonnes

FROM Bayonne or Biarritz, from the Basque country to Béarn, our way, either by road or rail, leads up the smiling valley of the Gave de Pau through Peyrehorade to Orthez. At the junction of the waters of Oloron and Pau, Peyrehorade is a large white village, or small town, in a pleasant valley of marsh-mallows and flags, at the foot of a bluff bearing the ruined castle of Aspremont. Here the Gave d'Oloron joins the Gave de Pau, and nine kilometres downstream, at Bec du Gave, the Gaves-Reunis, as they are termed officially, help to swell the Adour on its course to the sea. More or less tidal up to Peyrehorade the Gave d'Oloron receives the Gave de Mauléon. Though nothing but a canoe, and even that only with many portages, could float on them, both the Gave de Mauléon and the Gave d'Oloron are described officially as "*flottable*." The Gave de Pau is considered "*flottable*" from Bétharam bridge to its junction with the Adour, and it can be easily navigated in

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a canoe. The word *Gave*, so common in the Pyrenees, is the equivalent of the Scottish term "water", which, as most "Sassenachs" now know, is the happy mean between a river and a "burn", or brook; in other words, too important to be a brook, and too small to be a river, a *Gave* may be described as a stream. Barges proceed up the Gaves-Reunis to Peyrehorade, either floating up on the tide with the aid of an oar or a barge pole; under canvas, before a fair wind, or gasping up under steam. Sometimes the lover of the picturesque is lucky enough to meet a barge in tow of a yoke of oxen, surely a means of transport that would weary a tortoise and bore a snail.

It is a pleasant road to Orthez, through the wooded foot-hills of the Pyrenees. On the banks of the Gave, a silver stream studded with grey rocks in profusion, a sturdy peasant in his blue *boina*, *béret*, cap, or bonnet, as it would be called north of the Tweed, is goading his ploughing oxen to a final effort ere the sun sinks to rest behind an oak grove. Vast white farms squat beneath their broad red-tiled roofs. At a level crossing, we meet an old fellow of the hills, with his bonnet cocked over one ear, collecting rabbit skins in a rickety little donkey cart. At length we draw near to Orthez with the music of the Gave in our ears, rolling through the gold and russet of coppice and meadow to seek repose on the heaving bosom of the blue Atlantic. We meet a group of sturdy, stocky fellows with high cheek bones and strange speech, clad in blouses and the traditional



Photo

Brille

A PYRENEAN PEASANT WOMAN WITH HER DONKEY

Béarn

béret, with goads in their hands and, slung across their shoulders, in the Scots fashion, a shepherd's plaid, these are Basques come down from the hills, to some fair in Béarn.

Between Puyoo and Orthez, on the left bank of the Gave, was fought the Battle of Orthez on February 27th, 1814. First over the water were Sir Stapylton Cotton's Cavalry Division and Picton's 3rd Brigade. Soult's army, though superior in numbers, was defeated and pursued by the British cavalry, the French losses amounted to four thousand killed, wounded and prisoners, out of a total strength of forty thousand. The British forces were three thousand less: they lost, according to Napier, two thousand three hundred men. The cavalry pursuit was not pressed home owing to a wound received by Wellington. After such battles as Ypres and the Somme this reads like a street brawl, but the battles of the Peninsular War were full of "frightfulness" to the soldiers of those days, who suffered amputations without anæsthetics, fought in stifling kit on scanty rations and endured without a groan, marches and counter-marches, in fact all the horrors of war. This battle had followed hard on the crossing of the Adour described in Chapter III, and was the last and most bloody of the campaign, for the Battle of Toulouse ten days later was fought in ignorance of the fact that an armistice had been signed. There is a monument on the battlefield on the spot where the French General Foy received his fourteenth wound.

The glory of Orthez is a bridge built in the

Béarn

thirteenth and fourteenth centuries across the Gave de Pau. A tower with mellow walls and a roof of red tiles rising from the middle of the bridge, not only aids one to stride the Gave, but enabled the Béarnais to hold their capital against invaders, though in 1569 the town was taken by storm by the Calvinists under Count de Montgomery. All priests taken with arms in their hands who refused to abjure the Catholic Faith were hurled off the bridge into the river below. It is a picturesque combination of fort and bridge and should figure in every sketch book brought to the Pyrenees.

Until their removal to Pau at the end of the fifteenth century Orthez was the residence of the Princes of Béarn. In 1240 Count Gaston de Foix built the castle of Moncada on the plans of a similar fortress that had given him a deal of trouble to capture at Moncada, ten miles from Barcelona on the Vich railway. At both Moncada castles but ruined towers remain, that of Spain being the most imposing, for the Moncada Castle at Orthez was dismantled by order of Richelieu. Many were the crimes and deeds of violence perpetrated in the Moncada Castle at Orthez. Here, Gaston Phœbus, Count of Foix, stabbed his son who was accused of poisoning him. Here he stabbed Pierre Arnaut, governor of Lourdes, and here was poisoned Blanche de Navarre. Gaston Phœbus died in the village of Riou after a bear hunt. In 1388 Froissart, in search of copy for his *Chronicles*, laid his head at the Hôtel de la Lune, now the



Pau

PAU FROM THE BANKS OF THE GAVE

On the left is the castle, the birthplace of Henry of Navarre.

Pau

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Hôtel de la Belle Hôtesse. Well received by Gaston Phœbus, Froissart has much to tell us of life at the Court of Béarn, and he was present at Gaston Phœbus' death and burial. Gaston Phœbus, who committed most of his crimes when mad with ungovernable fits of temper, was a mighty hunter and wrote a book on the subject, he was a great lover of hounds and dogs of all kinds, and was probably no worse than other counts and princes of his age, only he had the misfortune to have had a "chield among him taking notes" in the shape of Froissart. One is still shown the House where Jeanne d'Albret, Queen of Navarre and mother of Henry IV, set up a Calvinist College. Onesime Reclus, the well-known French writer on geography and travel, who died in 1916, was born at Orthez in 1837.

Between Orthez and Pau is the little town of Lescar, built on the site of the ancient Beneharnum, once the capital of that district to which it gave its name, and from which is derived Béarn. Burnt down in 841 by the Saracens, Beneharnum arose phoenix-like from its ashes in 980 under the name of Lascarris. The twelfth-century church of Notre Dame is an interesting building, founded by Sancho of Gascony in expiation of a murder. Here were buried the grandfather of Henry IV, Henri d'Albret and his wife "la Marguerite des Marguerites," Jeanne d'Albret, and Catherine of Navarre. Until the abolition of the bishopric in 1790 the bishops of Lescar presided over the Parliament of Béarn.

Béarn

Let us follow the Court of Béarn from Orthez to Pau. Freedom from wind and facilities for field sports have done more than anything else to make Pau popular as a winter resort with British and American travellers. After the Napoleonic wars all Britain was agog to travel on the Continent once more, and what was more natural than a visit to the Pyrenees, where many had lost husbands, sons or relatives. Moreover, many of those who served in the Peninsular War had pleasant memories of the sunny plain they had found after the snows and cold of Spain and the passes of the Pyrenees. Several English physicians, Doctor Playfair, Sir Andrew Clark and Sir Alexander Taylor sent patients to winter at Pau, and while Biarritz was still an unknown fishing village, Pau was a favourite winter resort. In the early days of the last century travelling from England to Pau was a tedious business, and those ordered to winter in the south went out with their entire family and stayed from October till June. Beautiful as is the view of the Pyrenees the visitor soon began to look for some means of passing the day out of doors. We know that the British officers in the Peninsular War had a pack of hounds which they hunted behind the Lines of Torres Vedras in 1810. But it is often forgotten that a pack of sixteen couple of hounds were hunted at Orthez, where Wellington billeted at the *Inn de la Belle Hôtesse* in the winter of 1814, himself keeping a stable of sixteen hunters. It was at this inn that the Iron Duke, on the day of the Battle of Orthez, ate the goose that Soult

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had ordered for his own dinner. Thanks then to the Iron Duke, fox hunting had become a tradition at Pau, though it was not until 1847 that the Pau Fox Hounds were established by Mr. J. H. Livingstone. Polo is also played at Pau, and a Cross Country is organized by the Hunt Committee every season. This brings me to Horse Racing, which is also a tradition at Pau, dating back to the twelfth century when racing was subsidised by Gaston IV. The first modern horse race was run at Pau in 1842, though races organized in Pau were run at Tarbes in 1807. Pau Horse Show is famous throughout France. The eighteen-hole Golf Course is also of hoary origin dating back to the sixties. The moors at the back of Pau, on the Bordeaux Road, saw the first experiments in flying carried out by the brothers Wright in 1908, they were followed by Bleriot, Nieuport, Deperdussin, Voisin, Morane Saulnier, and Antoinette. During the Great War a military aerodrome was established on the historic moors of Pont-Long, and here were seen practising "stunts" many of the famous French "*aces*," such as Guynemer, Leblanc, Vedrines, Brindejone des Moulinais, Garros, Gilbert, Fonck, Fronval, Simon and Nungesser. Tennis, of course, is held in high honour at Pau, though the Béarnais themselves naturally prefer the Basque game of Pelota.

The glory of Pau is the view of the snow-clad mountains from the Boulevard des Pyrénées, a sunny ridge above the Gave facing due south, with no cold, wintry winds to blow down from

Béarn

the north. This is the real secret of the climate of Pau—the absence of any mountain range behind. At Pau the mountains lie south, so that any wind from them is tempered by the southern sunshine before reaching the ridge from which Pau contemplates the Pyrenees. It is very pleasant to lounge in the morning sunshine on the Boulevard des Pyrénées, exchange greetings with one's friends, and allow the eye to wander across the wooded slopes to the great white wall of mountains rearing their snowy peaks to the blue sky. At one's feet the Gave, as silvery as its salmon, runs through a land of emerald and russet. Woods, avenues, and groves cast a green mantle over the brown flanks of the Pyrenean foot-hills, dotted with small *châteaux* and country houses typically French in aspect. It is noon, as slowly, like the curtain of a theatre, the grey, woolly clouds are withdrawn, revealing the great white mass of the High Pyrenees, their virgin snows from the Pic du Midi de Bigorre to the Pic d'Anie glimmering in the mystic light of the midday sun. At the eastern extremity of the Boulevard des Pyrénées is the Casino, in beautiful gardens; on the slopes below, leading to the station, are many beautiful shrubs and plants, rhododendrons, camellias, mimosa, and palms. At the west end of the Boulevard stands the Castle where Henry IV was born and placed in a tortoise-shell cradle after his lips had been moistened with wine from the vineyard of Gaye near Gan, commonly called *vin de Jurançon*. The oldest parts of the castle are the four towers built by Gaston

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Phœbus, though the entire building has been restored since the Revolution. Abd-el-Kader was a prisoner in Pau Castle in 1848, after fighting against the French in Algeria from 1832 till 1847. From Pau he was taken to Amboise Castle on the Loire and finally ended his days in liberty in Syria; he died at Damascus in 1883, after receiving the Legion of Honour from Napoleon III for aiding the Christians in Syria during a massacre by the Turks and Druses. It was Abd-el-Kader who was described by Thackeray as a "lithe and long-winged hawk." Isabella II of Spain also spent some months in Pau Castle after her flight from Spain in 1869. There lodged beneath the roof of Pau Castle in their day, Marguerite de Valois (la Marguerite des Marguerites, sister of Francis I and wife of Henri d'Albret), Calvin, and the poet Clement Marot. Here on December 14th, 1553, was born Henry of Navarre, *Henri Quatre*, the great Gascon, who in spite of his religious waverings was the most popular King France has ever known. Besides Jeanne d'Albret and "... our Sovereign Liege, King Henry of Navarre", Pau was the birthplace of Jean de Gassion, Marshal of France (1609-1647), who was wounded seventeen times and helped Condé to defeat the Spanish infantry at the Battle of Rocroi in the Ardennes in 1643. Two other famous French soldiers saw the light of day at Pau, Bernadotte (1764-1844) and Bourbaki (1816-1897), while within 25 miles, at Tarbes, was born, in 1851, Marshal Foch. Marshal Bosquet, born in the Landes, died at Pau in 1861,

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he was one of the heroes of the storming of the Malakoff.

Born on January 26th, 1764, John Baptist Julius Bernadotte left his native Pau at the age of seventeen as a drummer boy in the Marines, by 1792 he had risen to the rank of colonel and 1799 saw him Minister of War. In 1804 Napoleon made him a marshal, and in the following year he helped to win the battle of Austerlitz. At Wagram in 1809, while he was fighting the main of the Austrian Army Napoleon deprived him of his reserves and he angrily demanded to be deprived of his command. However, he returned to Paris and commanded the troops covering Antwerp until Napoleon replaced him by Bessières and there were more words. In 1809 Gustavus IV of Sweden died and was succeeded by a childless uncle, Charles XIII, who chose as his heir Bernadotte. Napoleon, who had always been jealous of Bernadotte, did all in his power to hamper him, and Sweden was treated as an enemy. After the retreat from Moscow in 1812 relations were broken off entirely and in the following year Bernadotte submitted a scheme to the Allied Powers showing how France could be fought at Leipsig. He hoped to be elected emperor, and for that reason took no part in the 1814 campaign against France. In 1818 Charles XIII died and Bernadotte ruled well over Norway and Sweden for twenty-six years, paying off the Public Debt and doubling the mercantile marine. His son Oscar succeeded him in 1844. Just as Henry IV, a son of Pau, became a Catholic to wear the

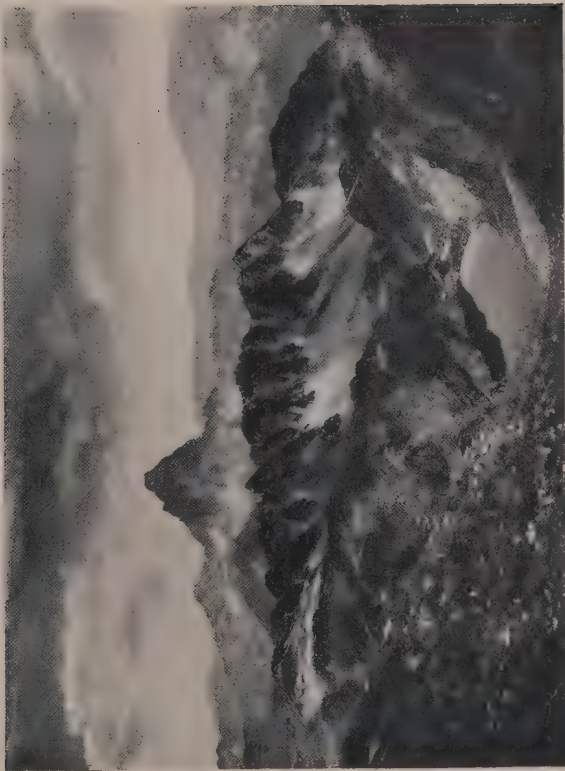


Photo Ford

THE PIC DU MIDI D'OSSAU

From the Col de Lurien. This magnificent crest is seen towering above a sea of snowy mountains, and is reputed to be the haunts of bears.

Béarn

crown of France, so Bernadotte, another son of Pau, became a Protestant to wear the crown of Sweden and both were popular kings.

Bourbaki made his reputation as a brave leader in Algeria and increased it at Alma and Inkermann, and during the Italian campaign in 1859. He was shut up in Metz in command of the Imperial Guard in the Franco-Prussian War. A secret mission to the Empress Eugenie failed, and he was placed in command of the remnants of the Army of the Loire and finally found himself pushed back to the Swiss frontier.

The charm of Pau lies in the variety of beautiful mountain drives within easy reach of a good car. One November afternoon, with a hint of winter in the air, a threat of rain perhaps, we motor out of the town, crossing the bridge over the Gave with a backward glance of admiration at the fine old castle rising from the river. At first a long, straight road beneath an avenue of plane trees leads through smiling country to Gan, a village at the Oloron cross roads. This was one of the three fortified towns of Béarn. One is still shown the house where Henry IV was wont to visit the fair Corisande d'Andouins, and the birthplace of Pierre Marca (1594-1662), Archbishop of Paris and historian of his native parish.

Hard by Gan, there still quaffs the sunshine the famous vineyard of Gaye, which produced the Jurançon wine used to wet the newborn lips of Henry IV. The little stream beside the road is the Neéz, and beyond the village of Rebenacq a subterranean branch of the Gave d'Ossau

Béarn

bubbles up through what is called the eye of Neéz, the source of the excellent water supply of Pau. After a short but stiff climb we find ourselves looking down on a kind of cross road of valleys with a magnificent view. We are now on the threshold of the Val d'Ossau. The villages of Sevignacq, Meyracq, and Saint Colomb make a pleasant note of white houses and slate roofs, with an old tower to tame the wild hill-side. But of still greater charm is Arudy, a considerable village to the right of the road. Higher up the valley on the opposite side of the road Castet is perched on twin hillocks above the Gave de Pau. On one stands the thirteenth-century castle of Gelos, while the church and its attendant cemetery crown the other. Rich in fifteenth-century houses is the next village of Bielle. In the church is a chest which once contained the "*fors*" or charters that the Counts of Béarn swore to respect. For until the Revolution this Val d'Ossau was a valley completely independent, half Béarnais, half Spanish, with its own rights and administering its own justice, in its own court. Near the church are the remains of a rest-house for pilgrims on their way to Saint James of Compostella in the province of Galicia. Their road led through Eaux Chaudes and Gabas, over the Pourtalet Pass, and down through Panticosa in Spain.

We now come to the capital of the valley, a delightful agricultural village of a couple of thousand souls called Laruns. There are white houses with archways and wooden balconies, and a vast arcaded square. In front of the church is a

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monument to J. B. Guindey who was born at Laruns in 1785. This village hero was a hussar who slew at Saalfeld on October 10th, 1806, Prince Ludwig of Prussia, a nephew of Frederick the Great. A great festival is held every year at Laruns on August 15th, when the women of the Val d'Ossau don the old-time scarlet *capulets* to dance and sing to the music of fife and tambourine. The *capulet* is a kind of mediæval hood or cowl, worn by the women of this Val d'Ossau who are called *Ossaloises*. Except on the occasion of this fête the *capulet* is black. One may see in Pau *Ossaloises* wearing the black *capulet* on market day, indeed they make a quaint note anywhere, with their caps, and long, plaited pigtails hanging down to the waist. In bad weather both men and women make picturesque figures in brown homespun cloaks with hoods, not unlike the brown burnous of the Moors and probably dating from their invasion of France across the Pyrenees. The Pic du Midi d'Ossau is still reputed to be the haunt of bears, and its name is derived from them, *oso* being the Spanish and *ours* the French for that animal, both derived from the Latin *ursus*. Laruns is a good spot for the painter, here he will still find many types of the old Pyrenean folk, both men and women, as well as many charming nooks and crannies among the arcades and balconies.

On the road out of Laruns we met many flocks of sheep and herds of cattle. One shepherdess was carrying a tiny, new-born lamb wrapped in a piece of sacking. Both men and women

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sported their brown frieze cloaks, for there was a steady drizzle that waxed as the day waned. Ox-carts were passed in charge of lads with *makilas* or goads. In most villages one finds a smith busy shoeing an ox in a kind of shed. The ox is tethered in a wooden frame and its hoof lashed on to a stone table, a system prevalent not only in the Pyrenees but away down in the Castilles; one notable smithy being under the Roman Aqueduct at Segovia. The rain produced a rich crop of huge green umbrellas, the oxen were swathed in blankets. Mules and donkeys, a pig in an ass cart with the farmer striding alongside, more sheep, and some fine cattle are overtaken outside Laruns. In the midst of these quiet pastoral folk we found a gigantic Power Station built by the Southern Railway Company to provide electric current for the haulage of their trains. The mountain streams, waterfalls, and even a small lake have been tapped and led down the mountain side in two great pipes to drive dynamos. This fine feat of electrical engineering is one of the most modern examples of harnessing the forces of nature to supply the requirements of modern civilization: it is an example of the use of what the French call *houille blanche*, or "white coal." Unlike most engineering undertakings this Power Station, by the breadth of its conception, does not appear a modern eyesore, a blot on the landscape. The Pic du Ger and the Pic du Midi d'Ossau are too magnificent, too mighty to allow any of the works of pigmy man to detract from their beauty.

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Beyond the Power Station two roads turn off at a tangent, that leading to Eaux Bonnes and that which seeks the Spanish frontier through Eaux Chaudes. More emerald than anything ever seen in the Emerald Isle is the Gave d'Ossau, as we drive up the narrow gorge, past gushing waterfalls. It is a wild scene, this stream, enclosed between the steep cliffs of the gorge, with long white waterfalls crashing down the mountain side. Mighty crags and colossal boulders, box bushes, solemn firs, half veiled in floating clouds of mist, clothe the sides of the mountains. Great walls of cliff, mightier than those of any cathedral, rise sheer from the seething torrent. Moss and ferns of slender grace are visible through the spray. The road is cut out of the side of the cliff overhanging the stream, and, in one place, runs through a tunnel. Proceeding through the wild Gorge de Hourat we come to the Custom's Post and Thermal Springs of Eaux Chaudes. This is no new cure resort recently brought into passing vogue, for here came Henry IV in the sweet company of Françoise de Montmorency, La Belle Fosseuse. From Eaux Chaudes the road leads up through admirable forest of beech trees studded with firs to Gabas. At the foot of the village is the watersmeet of the torrents of Brousset and Bious. More a frontier post than anything else, Gabas is a good centre for exploring the forest-clad mountain slopes in search of bears. So long ago as 1100, a chapel was built at Gabas for the use of pilgrims to and from Saint James of Compostella. From

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Gabas one can make an interesting motor run into the Spanish Pyrenees over the Pourtalet Pass, through the Spa of Panticosa down to Jaca, returning to France by Canfranc, over the Somport Pass, and down through Accous to Oloron. Both the Pourtalet and Somport Passes were used by pilgrims to the shrine of Saint James of Compostella throughout the Middle Ages.

Retracing our steps down the gorge of Hourat, more magnificent as the light waned, we entered the neighbouring valley and reached the twin Spa of Eaux Bonnes. In common with its twin, Eaux Chaudes, Eaux Bonnes is of ancient origin. Here in the sixteenth century were healed the Béarnais soldiers wounded at the Battle of Pavia in Italy, in 1525. To this day, the spring is called "Les Eaux d'Arquebusades." When one imagines the means available for the transport of wounded soldiers in the sixteenth century, one wonders how any of them survived the journey from Lombardy over the Alps and right across Provence to this Pyrenean valley. In more modern times a great number of famous people have sought relief at Les Eaux Bonnes, both the Empress Eugenie and Madame Sarah Bernhardt being rejuvenated at La Source Vieille.

Both Eaux Chaudes and Eaux Bonnes are good sporting centres for those who do not mind roughing it among the high mountains; in winter the douaniers and French customs officials at Gabas make good use of *skis*. In the summer there are trout in the Gave d'Ossau but winter provides hunting for bears, boar, and roe deer,



Photo

Yvon

PAU CASTLE
The door of the Cour d'Honneur

Béarn

as well as izard. Guides and hunters may be procured at both spas. Winter sports are practised at Eaux Bonnes when the weather permits. Nothing in the way of great bags should be expected, nor do the facilities for winter sports compare with those of Switzerland, but the man who looks upon winter sports and the pursuit of wild animals in their natural haunts as a means of spending honeyed hours among the snow-clad mountains will find much to amuse him in the beautiful Val d'Ossau.

Had we taken our drive a few weeks earlier in the autumn we should have been able to cross from Eaux Bonnes to the Valley of Argelès over the wonderful Col d'Aubisque, now closed to wheel traffic by the snows of winter. Unable to avail ourselves of this beautiful road we decide against spending a night at Eaux Bonnes, and our car takes us back over the same road to Pau. Although night has spread a cloak over the mountains this drive is not without charm. The drizzling mist has lifted, and we pass country carts and exchange greetings with benighted drovers until we sight the lights of Pau across the musical Gave, and seek our hotel and a well-earned dinner.

CHAPTER V

FROM PAU TO LOURDES

From Pau to Lourdes—Argelès—Cauterets—Luz and Gavarnie.

THERE are two motor roads from Pau to Lourdes, one up the valley of the Gave, the other out along the Tarbes road. We will take the latter and return by the former. It is a grand run along the straight flat Tarbes road through green open country as far as Soumoulou, where we find a village cattle show in progress. Farmers in the national blue *béret*, with the inevitable goad under their arms, stand beneath the plane trees, on the village square, with their cattle, of which they appear inordinately proud. Clad in their best blankets, the placid oxen are obviously conscious of what is expected of them and do their best to win medals for their masters. Not so a couple of recalcitrant bulls, who mistake the village square for the Plaza de Toros, and are careering about the road with a couple of sturdy farmers endeavouring to keep them in bounds at the end of a rope. It was market day at Pontacq where old women in black *capulets* were selling butter, eggs and poultry on the village



Photo Foré

l'air

THE BASILICA OF LOURDES FROM THE CASTLE

Behind the church on the bank of the river is the Grotto of Bernadotte Soubirous.

From Pau to Lourdes

square. A very good place for the man with the sketch book is Pontacq, here he will find a profusion of arcaded houses, quaint gables and balconies, a curious twelfth century tower and a fifteenth-century church. Many of us have admired Detaille's picture of the siege of Huningue in the Luxembourg Gallery in Paris. Pontacq is the birthplace of the heroic General Barbanegre who defended Huningue in Alsace against the Austrians in 1815.

At Pontacq we leave the high road to Tarbes, and turn off up the valley of the Ousse, through pretty wooded country with a wide panorama of the Pyrenees, stalwart young shepherds in charge of fleecy sheep and fine rams, compose pastoral groups against a charming background of foliage. The increased price of meat since the Great War has done much to better the lot of the Pyrenean flock-masters, though the Béarnais peasantry were always well-to-do, even that severe critic of French agriculture, Arthur Young, has nothing but praise for them. "We are now in Béarn, within a few miles of the cradle of Henry IV. Do they inherit these blessings from that good prince? The benignant genius of that good monarch seems to reign still over the country; each peasant has 'the fowl in the pot.'"

Emerging from the woods we sight the Pic du Jer which can be scaled in a funicular railway, and now the Castle of Lourdes becomes visible standing in the middle of the town on a miniature Edinburgh Rock. Across the Gave de Pau candles may be seen glittering in the Grotto,

From Pau to Lourdes

above which one can distinguish the ex-voto crutches.

Lourdes may be divided into two sections from the historical as well as the topographical point of view. There are two Lourdes, the ancient Lourdes and the Castle perched upon its rock like an eagle on its eerie, guarding the town against marauders from across the mountains, and the new Lourdes grouped about the Basilica.

Border forays, cattle lifting, the clash of arms, mourning maidens, and similar everyday happenings of mediæval life are related of Lourdes by Froissart. The Castle and surrounding country were ceded to the English Kings as part of his ransom by the French King John, by the treaty of Bretigny, May 8th, 1360. The Black Prince lodged in the Castle, now a museum of the Touring Club de France. Here Napoleon kept captive, in 1804, Lord Elgin, on his way home from the Ottoman Porte, where he collected the celebrated Elgin Marbles which he subsequently sold to the British Government for £35,000.

Modern Lourdes is one of the greatest pilgrim shrines of the Roman Catholic Church, and the mediæval side of the little hill town has been submerged by the various religious houses and lay hotels, restaurants and souvenirs stalls catering for the pilgrims.

The grotto and shrine date from 1858 when Bernardette Soubirous declared that the Virgin had appeared to her on the bank of the Gave.

From Pau to Lourdes

Life in Lourdes, to-day, is centred entirely about the Grotto and vast religious enclosure. At the time of the great pilgrimages, when the sick are brought from all over Roman Catholic Europe, a great feature is made of the torch-light processions. The Basilica, indeed the whole town, including the Castle perched on its rock, are entirely dwarfed by the mountains. It is impossible to build an impressive monument, ecclesiastical or otherwise, in the neighbourhood of mountains. The work of Nature is ever greater than that of pigmy man.

In the Middle Ages the monks and priests were well aware of this when they built the great masterpieces of Gothic architecture on plains, and in river valleys, far away from the natural competition of a mountain range. The Dom of Cologne, Nôtre Dame d'Amiens, St. Pierre de Beauvais, Nôtre Dame de Paris, Nôtre Dame de Rouen, St. Denis, Nôtre Dame de Chartres, or Nôtre Dame de Rheims, would have appeared just as insignificant as the Basilica of Lourdes, had they been erected on a similar site among the mountains.

Remarkable monuments are the War Memorial and the Breton Calvary of granite, brought from the quarries of Kersanton, near Brest. The church, or rather churches, for there are three built, one above the other, are filled with tablets in all languages erected by pilgrims. Situated on the banks of the Gave, the Grotto is blackened by the smoke of innumerable candles, its entrance hung about with crutches and artificial limbs,

From Pau to Lourdes

discarded by pilgrims. The miraculous water trickles down the rocks and is led to taps for pilgrims desirous of drinking it. Near by is the bathing establishment.

From the summit of the Pic de Jer one enjoys a magnificent bird's-eye view of Lourdes, the meandering Gave and the snow-capped Pyrenees.

One can either proceed up the valley of Argelès from Lourdes or return to Pau down the valley of the Gave. A pretty road leads along the river bank to Saint Pé, where we find a picturesque square of typical Béarnais houses. A quaint tower and church remain of a Benedictine Abbey founded by Sancho Guillaume, Duke of Gascony, and burnt down in 1569. Near by are the Caves of Betharram containing numerous curious stalactites. Crossing a very pretty seventeenth century ivy-clad bridge with creepers trailing in the stream, we come to the Sanctuary of Betharram, built in fulfilment of a vow by a young girl who fell in the Gave and was saved from drowning by clutching a branch. "Betharram" is derived from the Gascon words *bet-arram*, beautiful branch. At Nay are the Maison Carré of Jeanne d'Albret and a fifteenth century church. Here was born the theologian, Jacques Abbadie, in 1657, who ended his days in London. At Coarraze is a tower forming part of the castle where Henry IV was brought up as a peasant boy by Sussanne de Bourbon, Baronne de Missans. Driving home one has a fine view of the snow-clad mountains. A white mysterious light through a rift in the clouds illuminates the snowy



Photo

Labouche Freres

THE CIRQUES

Amongst the most beautiful features of the Pyrenees are the Cirques ; that of the Lys, above Luchon, ranks high as one of the beauty spots of Europe. In the distance are the snowy glaciers of Crabioules, glistening in the southern sunshine ten thousand feet above sea level.

From Pau to Lourdes

peaks as though some spot of light from Mars were playing upon the Pyrenees. It is a light as cold as a moonbeam and as mystic as the Holy Grail.

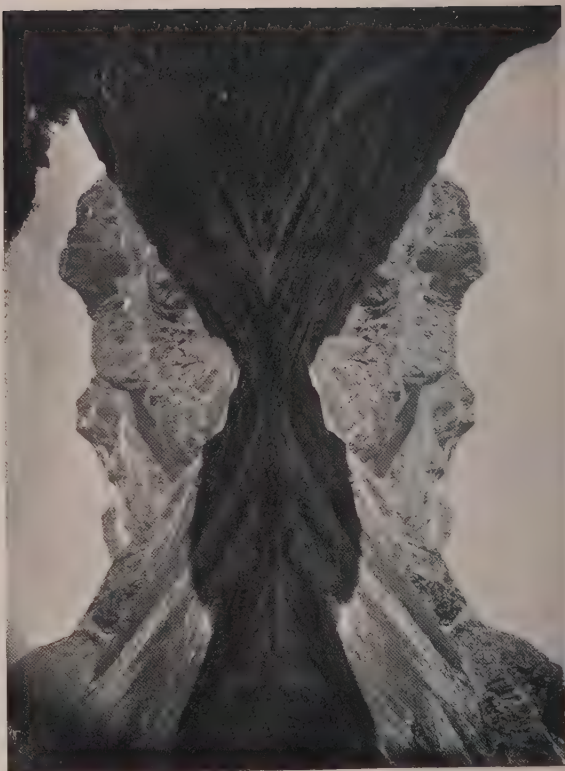
Following the Gave we finally find ourselves at Pau as night is falling.

As we have left Pau for good before visiting Lourdes we will make our way out of that town, past the foot of the Pic de Jer, towards the beautiful valley of Argelès. In the streets of Lourdes we meet a group of women clad in black cloaks; these are *pleureuses*, hired mourners, or female mutes, on their way to practise their profession at a funeral. We pass Vidalos Tower, a Roman fort rebuilt in 1175 to guard the valley of the Gave de Pau against the raids of Saracen marauders. Magnificent are the views of the snowy peaks up the valley towards Gavarnie, and the eye can only be withdrawn with regret from the great white masses of the Vignemale and the Maladetta. Proceeding along this green, smiling valley, watered by the Gave de Pau, we reach Argelès, a charming spot with superb mountains on all hands. Besides providing good walks for those who are unable to climb, Argelès is a good centre for the dry-fly fisherman. From Argelès a road runs over the Col d'Aubisque to Eaux Bonnes and the Val d'Ossau, but owing to the great altitude of the Pass the road is only practicable during the summer months. One of the most pleasant memories of Argelès is the beautiful view of the Pic du Viscos. Though he was born at Tarbes the family of Marshal Foch

From Pau to Lourdes

came originally from Argelès and one is shown their modest dwelling. Thermal baths, a public park, a few quaint houses, and the statue of Cyprien Despourrins, who was born at Argelès in 1693 and died in 1742, exhaust the sights of Argelès. Cyprien Despourrins was a rustic poet who sang of his beautiful valley and native mountains, and was a more peaceful inhabitant than Barrère who lived for some time at the Château de Vieusac.

There are some delightful rambles about this radiant valley and its verdant slopes. Saint Savin, a village on the green hill-side, is particularly charming. Here are the remains of an abbey founded by Charlemagne on the site of the hermitage of Saint Savin, son of the Count of Barcelona, where Roland the Paladin slew two pagan giants. In 843 the abbey was burnt down by the Normans, but out of evil came good, for a hundred years later Raymond I, Count of Bigorre, not only rebuilt the monastery but gave the monks all Cauterets Valley, and to this day the Thermal Springs of Cauterets are the property of Saint Savin. The quaint church, half-fort, half-chapel, dates from the eleventh century, a square tower, arcaded porch and cupola add to the picturesqueness of a most remarkable building. Quite in keeping with the ancient note of the church is the village square surrounded with archaic houses adorned with antique balconies and old world colonnades, the whole village presenting a curious aspect, half pastoral, half antiquarian. From the



Pyrene

THE LAC D'ESTOM

One of the many little lakes above Cauterets that reflect the stern mountains in their mirror-like surface.

Pyrene

From Pau to Lourdes

neighbouring seventeenth-century chapel of Notre Dame de la Pitié one obtains a glorious perspective of the valley of Argelès and the Pic de Viscos. On the grassy slopes at the foot of this pretty little chapel, one may dream away enchanted hours, basking in the southern sunshine and quaffing deep draughts of that ethereal champagne, the Pyrenean air.

From this old-fashioned backwater one returns to the main road in the valley, past the Château de Miramont, where the local poet Cyprien Despourrins wrote some of his less mediocre lines, and on to the strange scattered villages of Pierrefitte-Nestalas, and their curious sixteenth and seventeenth century houses. Plunging into a narrow gorge, between lofty mountains, the road passes the workings of a lead mine and follows the Gave of that name right up to Cauterets. Up and up we climb with mountains above and the stream below, in our ears the pleasant splashing of swiftly running water and the musical note of the birds. Ash and beech woods, studded with stately firs, give way to a profusion of pines as we wind up and ever up, round the hair-pin bend of the Snail (*Limaçon*), past Calypso's Inn and the electric power station. Louder grows the music of running water as high, silver waterfalls come crashing down the mountain side to swell the foaming torrent. At length we find the hotels and Baths of Cauterets at the top of this wild canyon. Cauterets is a considerable resort, with all that goes to the entertainment of the summer visitor who seeks health in

From Pau to Lourdes

pleasant surroundings. Barristers, men of letters, singers and politicians, take their tired throats to be rejuvenated at Cauterets. Here Marguerite de Navarre, sister of Francis I, wrote most of her *Heptameron*, and here came such diverse writers as Rabelais and Chateaubriand. A mile above the town are the sulphur springs of La Raillère, smelling even more strongly of rotten eggs than the famous Esplanade des Oeufs in the town. This sulphurous smell of rotten eggs is far from agreeable to those who are not in need of the cure, but it must be admitted that the walks and rambles round Cauterets are of great beauty. Only a few yards above the Raillère spring is the imposing Cascade de Cerisey, a waterfall 4000 feet above sea level. A good bridle-path leads up through pine woods and wild rhododendrons to the Pont d'Espagne with a glorious view of the Glaciers of the Vignemale. The Pont d'Espagne spans the torrent descending from the Lake de Gaube. Here two torrents unite in a beautiful watersmeet at 4880 feet. An hour's walk brings one another thousand feet up to the green waters of the lake, surrounded by steep precipices dotted with black firs which serve as an excellent foil to the glittering snows of the Vignemale. From this lake the experienced mountaineer can scale the Vignemale whose Pic Longue, 10,820 feet, is the highest point in the French Pyrenees. Thanks to the pioneer work of Count Henry Russell in 1881, the ascent now presents no difficulty to those who are trained to Alpine work. From the Lake de Gaube a path can be followed over the

From Pau to Lourdes

Col d'Ossoue to Gavarnie, but it should not be lightly undertaken. By the shores of the lake is a monument to a young married couple who were drowned in the lake a month after their marriage in England. On the lake is a boat for fishing.

Even in late autumn bright sunny days may be spent in the silent woods above the Cascade de Cerisey. Here one can commune with Nature undisturbed and drink deep of the mountain air until a violet haze cloaks the Pyrenees for the night.

Returning down the Gave de Cauterets to Pierrefitte Nestalas one can take the road through Luz and Saint Sauveur to Gavarnie. Pierrefitte Nestalas is the rail-head whence two electric trams branch off, one to Cauterets, the other to Luz. This gorge is less severe than that of Cauterets though its equal in grandeur. There is a deal of Scandinavia about this valley. Imagine a Norwegian fjord with fresh green water meadows and a lovely little boulder-strewn stream instead of the sea. After a time the defile opens out into a radiant verdant valley with hamlets clinging to the mountain side and patches of cultivated land. Above the little villages climb pine forests reaching to the zone of barren rock.

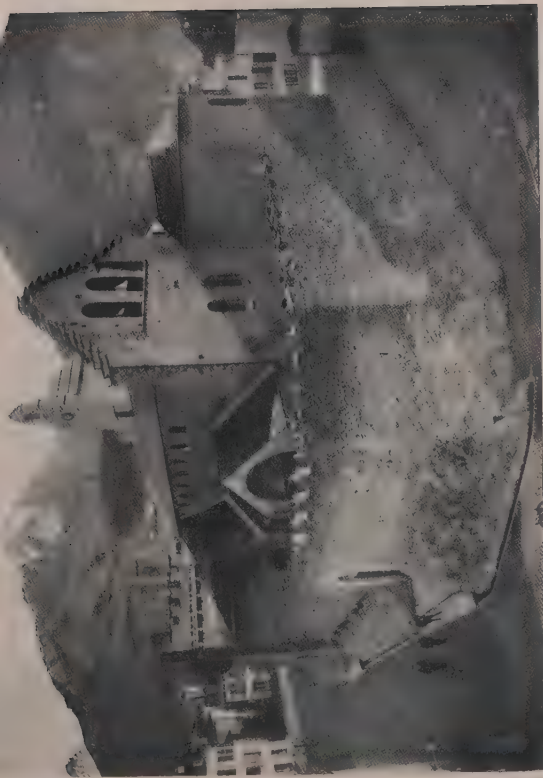
Situated at the confluence of the Gaves de Pau and Bastan, Luz presents a most picturesque aspect. First one notices a ruined castle on a rock, built by the English in the fourteenth century, but the glory of the place is the fortified church built by those monkish soldiers the

From Pau to Lourdes

Knights Templars to defend the valley against the raids of the Moors. The crenellated walls are of slightly later date, having been erected by the Knights of Malta who took over the defence after the Pope suppressed the Knights Templars. It is certainly one of the most curious churches in existence. Above Luz is a chapel restored by Napoleon III on the site of the hermitage of Father Ambrose, a Capuchin Friar, who died in 1778.

A fine bridge erected by order of Napoleon III, in 1860, spans the gorge. The thermal resort of Saint Sauveur is of less interest than either Luz or the Pont Napoleon. A column put up by Napoleon bore an inscription obliterated by local republicans who, however, did not allow their political opinions to prevent them making use of the bridge. Though roughly furnished, the farm-houses round Luz are surprisingly clean. The granges high up on the mountains are only inhabited in summer: even the herds come down to spend Sunday carousing in the village wine shops.

After crossing the Pont Napoleon the road to Gavarnie runs through some magnificent scenery, and even in the late spring one generally finds snow before reaching the village. This road is much used by country women from the mountain farms who ride down to market on donkeys, perched on the top of their goods, busily knitting. In the distance one sights the Brèche de Roland, a gap in the mountains like a missing tooth, said to have been cut by Roland with his trusty



Photo

Maurice Tesson

THE CHURCH OF THE TEMPLARS AT LUZ

This fortified church was built by those monkish soldiers the Knights Templars to defend the valley against the Moors.

From Pau to Lourdes

sword Durandal in an attempt to break it lest it fell into the hands of the Moors.

One of the best centres for mountain rides and travelling across the range into the Spanish Pyrenees, Gavarnie is a curious village whose inhabitants derive their living from hiring donkeys, mules, and horses to tourists who wish to visit the famous Cirque. Here are to be found the best guides, for, here it was that Charles Packetrained Passet, most famous of all Pyrenean guides, who has handed on the traditions of his service. Certainly no one should leave the Pyrenees without visiting the Cirque. As its name implies this is a semicircle of mountains. It is a *cul-de-sac* of ice and snow, half cliff, half glacier. The Gave de Pau drops 1380 feet down the face of the cliff with only two breaks, falling to the ground in a cloud of thin spray. Except for some three weeks in summer the floor of the Cirque is ever carpeted in deep snow. In reality this *cul-de-sac* is the most southern point of the French side of the High Pyrenees. The tallest cliff of the ice-bound semicircle of precipices is quite 1400 feet high. To sum up, one may define the Cirque de Gavarnie as a trio of colossal semicircular walls of ice-clad mountain, with waterfalls trickling down the cliffs from the glaciers that lie on the top of the walls.

Many are the beautiful climbs and mule rides from Gavarnie: the ascent of the Brèche de Roland, that *cirque* above the Cirque, the Marboré, the Mont Perdu, second only in height to the Maladetta, first climbed by Ramond in 1802.

From Pau to Lourdes

The Brèche de Roland is crossed by smugglers and political refugees, in preference to the Port de Gavarnie, quite an easy way into Spain. The Val de Broto, Bourcharo and Torla, whence one can explore the Val de Arazas, can all be explored from Gavarnie, nor if one takes a guide is it necessary to camp in the open unless one really desires to do so. It should be understood that the great peaks, the Brèche de Roland, and the Mont Perdu, are invisible from the Cirque itself. One sees the layers of ice-covered cliffs, rising in tiers from the foot of the Cirque, and one sees the waterfalls and icicles but one must not expect to see the Mont Perdu from the Cirque. An account of the beauty spots to be visited on mule-back from Gavarnie would fill several volumes such as this, but he who would see the wild grandeur of the mountain valleys and the lovely flowers and shrubs, gentians, rhododendrons and asphodel must make an expedition on horseback with a trusty guide from Gavarnie.

Retracing our steps from Gavarnie we may visit from Gedre another *cirque*, that of Troumouse: it is a true *cirque* but less imposing than that of Gavarnie. These *cirques* are a peculiar feature of the Pyrenees, in former times they were known under their name in the local *patois*, *oules*, derived from the Spanish word *olla*, a pot, which reminds one that the famous Spanish stew, the *olla podrida*, is unknown among the Pyrenean hill folk, who, however, will produce another kind of stew called a *puchero* consisting mostly of goat and chick peas, hot water predominating.



Photo

A PICTURESQUE CORNER OF AX-LES-THERMES

Buille

From Pau to Lourdes

Above the village of Héas in the valley of that name which ends in the Cirque de Troumouse, stands the highest chapel in the Pyrenees, Notre Dame de Héas, 5080 feet. Built between 1717 and 1724 the chapel contains a statue of the Virgin clad in a scarlet *capulet*. Several landslides have occurred in the Val de Héas, one in 1650, which blocked up the stream and formed a lake until it burst its natural dam and flooded the valley in 1788, and a more recent one in 1915.

From Gedre we return to Luz and strike off up the Gave de Bastan to Barèges. Though probably the most famous Spa, Barèges from its situation in the least imposing of the valleys is not popular with tourists. The first bathing establishment was erected at Barèges in 1550. In 1675 and 1677 the Duke de Maine and Madame de Maintenon visited Barèges, and in 1760 a military hospital was established for the benefit of soldiers wounded in the Seven Years War. The Pic du Midi de Bigorre, 9480 feet, can be ascended with ease from Barèges. Bagnères de Bigorre on the banks of the Adour has saline springs known to the Romans. It was ceded to the English by the Treaty of Bretigny and is mentioned in Froissart's *Chronicles*. From Barèges one can drive to Bagnères de Bigorre over the Col du Tourmalet and down through Campan.

CHAPTER VI

LUCHON

Luchon—The High Pyrenees—And the Val d'Aran—
The Source of the Garonne

OF all the Pyrenean Spas Luchon is the most up-to-date; here will be found hotels to cater for all pockets and all tastes, with shops equal to those of Biarritz or the Riviera. Not only is it a fashionable cure resort but a starting point for mountain ascents equal to Gavarnie, it also caters for the lover of winter sports. This gay town is situated in a pretty well-cultivated valley surrounded with mountains. In addition to the inevitable casino the powers that be at Luchon have had the good sense to add a golf course and facilities for tennis. Too many spas are apt to think that all one wishes to do is to take the waters and gamble. Trout fishing, rough shooting and mountaineering are among the more natural out-door attractions in the vicinity of Luchon.

The history of Luchon is singularly uninteresting for a frontier town. I can find only one record of its having been sacked, and that as late as 1711, by Charles of Austria. It was in 1754 that

Luchon

Luchon began to come into prominence as a Spa. Arthur Young who visited the place with the Duke de la Rochefoucauld in 1787, gives us a most interesting account of life at a fashionable French Spa before the Revolution. "Having been now ten days fixed in our lodgings, which the Count de la Rochefoucauld's friends had provided for us, it is time to minute a few particulars of our life here. Monsieur Lazowski and myself have two good rooms on a ground floor, with beds in them, and a servant's room for 4 liv (3/6) a day. . . . A *traiteur* serves our table at 4 liv a head for the two meals, two courses and a good dessert for dinner; for supper one and a dessert; the whole very well served, with everything in season; the wine separate, at 3d. a bottle."

Then, as now, the chief amusement at Luchon in the "Assemblies" was "Cards, trick-track, chess, and sometimes music, but the great feature is cards." Arthur Young appreciated the flora of the Pyrenees, much preferring to ramble about the mountain slopes and valleys to the attraction of afternoon "trick-track." "What is a man good for after his silk breeches and stockings are on, his hat under his arm, and his head *bien poudré*? Can he botanise in a watered meadow?" No doubt he was charmed with the blue of the Alpine gentians, the wild rhododendrons, and asphodels of the upper valleys.

Whatever time of the year one visits Luchon one will no doubt take the funicular railway up to Superbagnères, to enjoy, in season, either

Luchon

winter sports or mountain rambles. Another classical outing from Luchon is the drive up the Vallée du Lys to the Cascade d'Enfer, the Cascade du Gouffre Infernal and the Cirque de Crabioules. The Lac d'Oo and the Chapel de Saint Aventin should also be visited, but the finest excursion is that over the Port de Venasque, the view of the Maladetta and the snowy mass of the Spanish mountains being without equal in the whole Pyrenean range.

An easy and interesting raid into Spain may be made from Luchon over the Portillon to the Val d'Aran, a valley geographically French, politically Spanish. In any case worth a visit as being the head-waters of that mighty river the Garonne. The road climbs up through

“ The savour and shade of old-world pine-forests
Where the wet hill-winds weep.”

Snow is generally encountered, except in summer, before reaching the summit of the pass. The frontier is marked with a stone bearing the letters “ F ” and “ E ” separated by a cross with the figures 1306, no doubt the height in metres, certainly not the date. On the Spanish side we find a magnificent view of the Val d'Aran, just above the Guard House. I once walked over this pass from Luchon to seek the source of the Garonne. But three Spanish Customs' guards were visible and no one stopped me as I strolled down into Spanish territory. On the mountain side I entered into conversation with a shepherd who had once been as far into France as Bordeaux.



Photo

A TYPICAL SCENE IN THE SPANISH PYRENEES

This charming old world bridge spans the [Rio Arie near Bouchard], a Spanish village 4350 feet above sea level.

Sport & General

Luchon

The valley was well cultivated and one could see the silver ribbon of the young Garonne winding down towards France from the snowy flanks of the Maladetta. There are really two sources of the Garonne, for two torrents unite before the stream leaves Spain, the Goueil de Joucou, or western branch, and the "eyes of the Garonne," the eastern source on the Pla de Beret, close to the Noguera Pallaresa, a tributary of the Ebro.

After wandering about the upper part of the Val d'Aran I walked down to Bosos and slept a night at a quaint *posada* kept by a jolly old Frenchman with a wooden leg. In the morning I was awakened by the music of innumerable little bells, and witnessed the departure of the village goatherd to spend the day on the mountain side with some five hundred goats. Though not so interesting as Viella, higher up the valley, Bosos is very Spanish with houses and wooden balconies overhanging the Garonne, and a quaint old church. Taking a seat on the box of the diligence I drove down the valley past women in coloured kerchiefs busy in the fields, and ploughing oxen, over the Pont du Roi into France. This Pont du Roi, once but an insignificant wooden structure, has been rebuilt in marble. It marks the frontier, and spans the mighty Garonne as it enters France. Fos is the first village in France, and here the "dilly" was visited by the douaniers. I drove on down the valley to "the key of France," Saint B  at, a village with marble quarries, and a small mountain fort used to signal the approach of the marauding Moors. Here, as in Luchon

Luchon

valley, most of the people are pedlars who despair of wringing a living from the land, and travel all over France in horse caravans selling boots and shoes. The marble quarries of Saint B  at were worked by the Romans : they supplied the marble for Trajan's Column and the fountains of Versailles. From Saint B  at I walked to Marignac and took the train down to Toulouse. The true vagabond who is prepared to rough it with what he can carry in his pocket will find it possible to spend many days of sheer delight rambling about the Val d'Aran, especially up beyond Viella and Salardu, for not only is the scenery beautiful but one has the spice of being in sunny Spain, in one of the valleys that saw some of the hottest fighting in the cruel Carlist Wars.

The great mountaineering excursion of the High Pyrenees is the ascent of the Pic d'Aneto or N  thou. It should of course only be attempted by trained mountaineers with guides and proper outfit. A magnificent ride for those who do not mind roughing it is from Luchon to Zaragoza, via Venasque and Barbastro.

CHAPTER VII

SOME PYRENEAN TOWNS

Tarbes—St. Bertrand-de-Comminges—Capvern—Toulouse
—Foix—Carcassonne and the Valley of Aude

TARBES being held in high repute for its horses, one is surprised to find the peasants in the neighbourhood using oxen to carry out their haulage and field labour. The horses apparently are only bred for the use of the army. From its position at an important cross roads and railway junction every visitor to the Pyrenees passes through Tarbes sooner or later, but finding it a dull place moves on. There is really nothing to see or do at Tarbes, though, as the birthplace of Marshal Foch it will always be famous.

Not far from Tarbes, on the way to Toulouse, are the waters of Capvern, but the most interesting place within the vicinity of Tarbes is the village of Saint Bertrand-de-Comminges, founded by the ancient Iberians seventy-seven years B.C. Once a Bishop's See and the capital of a district, the little walled hill-town is now a hamlet, deserted but for antiquarians and seekers after the picturesque who are well rewarded for their pains. High

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perched on a rock the church is too far from the mountains to be dwarfed, and both from its position, and in itself, is an edifice of sheer delight. Founded in 1002 the church is Gothic with a Romanesque front; the nave and choir with eleven aisles were completed in 1535. In addition to twelfth-century cloisters the visitor will find a carved-wood rood—loft and many carved stalls. Once a thriving ecclesiastical town in high favour with Pope Clement V, Saint Bertrand-de-Comminges is now but an empty shell, a museum for the delectation of antiquarians, and a joy for ever to lovers of the picturesque.

Toulouse is the capital of all the French Pyrenees, their foot-hills and the great plain through which the Garonne flows to the Atlantic. On the other side of the watershed, it holds sway over the Languedoc almost to the Mediterranean and Montpellier. Fields of violets, maize and tobacco grow between the banks of the Garonne and the wonderful canal of the two seas. This canal links the Atlantic with the Mediterranean, crossing the Garonne and Tarn on gigantic aqueducts. Begun in 1666, it was completed from the Mediterranean to Toulouse by 1681. Paul Riquet the engineer was a native of Béziers, though Toulouse has erected his statue on the banks of his canal. A city of learning in the Middle Ages Toulouse has a school of literature, and a style of brick architecture of its own. Full of life is this great city with broad open spaces alternating with ancient narrow streets. Saint Stephen's Cathedral, the Capitol, and Saint

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Sernin's with a brick tower in the local style are the chief sights, and *pâté de foie gras* the leading gastronomic speciality. A curious mill called the *Moulin du Bazacle* adds to the picturesqueness of the Garonne, while the barge harbours of the canal provide subjects for the sketch-book. Wind-swept in winter, Toulouse is a furnace in summer, but many pleasant hours can be spent wandering about its churches. With Nice and Paris, Toulouse has a school of cookery and hotel keeping. In front of the station, is the Matabiau lock in the canal, whence at the Battle of Toulouse a well-posted French battery cut up Freyre's Spaniards and enabled Soult to withdraw in safety across the canal. It was in the house of the section engineer of the Canal du Midi, at the watershed of Naourouse, that Wellington signed the armistice, in 1814, after the Battle of Toulouse.

From Toulouse one can go up to Foix, the capital of the Ariège, with a quaint castle standing on a great rock in the middle of the valley, crowned with a coronet of lofty towers. Here was the home of the Counts of Foix who made much history in the Middle Ages and whose last and most illustrious member fell at the Battle of Ravenna in 1512. Twenty-five miles up the valley we come to Ax, the ancient *Aquae*, a village of sulphur springs that has made some strides as a tourist centre in late years. From Ax it is possible to cross over to Quillan in the valley of the Aude, or one may go right on over the Col de Puymorens to Bourg-Madame and Puigcerda in Spanish Catalonia. This is an

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alternative route to that from Vernet-les-Bains to the Mountain Republic of Andorra.

Situated on the River Aude is, or rather are, Carcassonne, for there are two towns, one ancient, the other comparatively modern. The lower town, now a most flourishing wine centre, thronged with rich farmers and vintners, was laid out by Saint Louis I as a suburb for civilians evacuated from the fortress above.

Crowning a hill on the right bank of the Aude is the ancient Cité surrounded by a double wall. Nowhere can one find a more perfect monument to the Knights of Old than the turrets and battlements of Carcassonne. "I doubt that there exists anywhere in Europe," wrote the great French architect Viollet-le-Duc, "as complete and as formidable a system of defence of the sixth, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, as interesting a subject of study, and a more picturesque situation."

Every warrior of the Middle Ages from Charlemagne to Simon de Montfort has besieged or defended Carcassonne. In 1356 it defied the Black Prince who burnt down the lower town and ravaged the countryside for miles round in his fury at failing to take the Cité. Here, indeed, are tomes of history writ in stone. When evening steals up from the valley and the walls are changed from dove grey to violet in the rays of the setting sun, then is Carcassonne at her best. Then, when the voices of the craftsmen are stilled, is one's mind flooded with memories of the glorious past, with the glamour of the deeds of old. One can



Vue d'ensemble

THE MEDIEVAL CITY OF CARCASSONNE

du 19^e siècle

Its walls and turrets are unique in the world. Every warrior of the Middle Ages from Charlemagne to Simon de Montfort defended or laid siege to Carcassonne ; so strong were the defences that they successfully defied even the Black Prince.

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almost hear the clash of arms. One is thrilled with the romance of the Middle Ages.

After the Rhone the Aude is the most important French river flowing into the Mediterranean and its upper waters can be explored from Carcassonne. Well wooded are the banks as one follows the river through a land of brown downs and vineyards to the rich straggling village of Limoux, famous for two good things, wine and nougat. Alet is the next village, and here we find a charming bridge spanning the Aude and the ruins of the Cathedral of Notre Dame, built in the eleventh century on the site of a ninth-century Abbey. Much of the ruinous state of the building is due to its illtreatment at the hands of the Huguenots in 1577, who completely demolished the old Abbey. Hard by the ruins stands Saint Andrew's Church. With vineyards, baths, and the river Aude, Alet is a pleasant little spot for an hour or two. At Couiza, on the river bank, we admire the great square sixteenth-century castle of the Dukes of Joyeuse. With four massive towers, this is indeed a stronghold. The valley narrows, and one approaches the mountains dark with pines. Peasants devoid of anything interesting in the way of costume stride along at the head of their ox-carts.

In a green valley walled-in by scowling mountains stands Quillan, a town of old houses with quaint balconies overhanging the river. Here in a curious dark inn one partakes of the midday meal with a band of "bagmen" discussing Rugby football with southern heat. In all the Pyrenees

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and the Languedoc the men have taken up football with gusto, Toulouse, Cette, and Montpellier turning out some capital teams.

Above Quillan, the Aude runs through a boulder-strewn valley with willows dipping in the stream. Soon this valley narrows and we find the river gushing down a narrow gorge of tall white crags. Soon these white cliffs rise to a mountainous height. The forest of Fanges covers the slopes of this mountain wall through which the Aude has forced a passage on its course from the Pyrenees to the blue Mediterranean. In several places the road runs through tunnels cut in the side of the canyon. Eventually the road to Montlouis, which we are following, emerges from this grand *Defilé de Pierre-Lys* as it is called, at Saint Martin Lys, a hamlet at the foot of the Cap de Fer (3425 feet).

We are now amidst a scene of great grandeur, the silver Aude pouring through a narrow gorge walled with forest-clad mountains, green in summer, russet in winter. Twelve miles upstream from Quillan we reach Axat, a quaint village in the gorge of the Aude, a place of brown houses with red roofs. As brown as the rest of the village is the church, roofed with red tiles, in a picturesque site on a terraced hill dominating the river.

Just down-stream of Axat, the Rebenty torrent joins the Aude. A road runs beside this water to Ax-les-Thermes. One can follow it up as far as the Castel de Chazelles beyond Belfort, whence a road climbs up to Espezel (3000 feet) and then

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descends to Quillan whence one can return to Carcassonne, though one can either carry on up the road to Montlouis or cross the Col de Pradel to Ax-les-Thermes. To-day, I had set out to motor to Bourg Madame but was warned that I should find snow on the Col de Puymorens, so it was decided to return to Carcassonne by way of Espezel. After leaving the Aude we followed the Rebenty water to Marsa, past several ruined castles, up a narrow gorge clad in a forest of oak, beech, and fir to Joucou, once the seat of a Benedictine Abbey. Here and there, beside the road, we found charcoal burners unloading sacks from donkeys, to be picked up by ox-carts. Threading three tunnels in a wild gorge, the road brings us to Belfort, a brown red-roofed village with a Catalan tower. In a shed an ox stands with its hoof lashed up ready for shoeing in the usual Pyrenean manner. At the quaint Castel de Chazelles we leave the road to Ax-les-Thermes and climb up a series of hair-pin bends to a bleak plateau, past flocks of brown sheep tended by shepherds in brown cloaks.

It is late autumn and the primitive village of Espezel has already donned a mantle of snow. Deep in mud are the narrow streets and the stables reek of oxen. A few villagers huddled in cloaks splash about in the slush. Grim poverty seems to stalk abroad at Espezel. A hard life is that of the Pyrenean peasant. No wonder the men from the Pyrenees make such good soldiers. From the snowy plateau of Espezel we obtain grand views of the surrounding mountains and the

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forests of Picaussel and Callong, and southward stretches the great white wall of the Pyrenees. But the cold wind sweeps across this snow-clad plateau three thousand feet above sea level. We hasten on, lest the great leaden, snow-charged clouds come down and bind us prisoner. A picturesque ruin is sighted near the hamlet of La Peyre, and soon we are running along the edge of Callong Forest. Once more we admire the grand panorama of the snowy peaks in the south. Away down in the green ribbon of the Aude Valley we sight the red roofs of Quillan and the white cliffs of the Pierre-Lys Defile. A flight of hair-pin bends takes us down to Quillan and we dine in Carcassonne.



Photo

Buille

THE GORGE OF ST. GEORGES

The river Aude forces a passage through tall white crags on its course to the blue Mediterranean.

CHAPTER VIII

THE EASTERN PYRENEES

Perpignan—Port Vendres—Collioure—Banyuls—Amelie
—Vernet—Canigou—Montlouis—Font Romeu—Bourg-
Madame—Llivia—Puigcerda—Andorra

COMING down from the High Pyrenees, or even the Basque country, the Eastern Pyrenees appear somewhat bare and windswept. They lack the luxuriant vegetation due to the damp atmosphere of the Atlantic. Here on the Mediterranean sea-board the hills are sun-baked in summer and withered by the cruel blasts of the *mistral* and *tramontana* in winter. The *mistral* is a bitter north-west wind that blows down from the snowy plateau of the Cevennes, and not from the Alps. The name is derived from the provençal word *magistral*, which is, of course, a corruption of the Latin *magister*, a master; and a masterly wind it is, too, as sailors find to their cost. But we have the advantages of the Mediterranean climate, lack of rain, and change of vegetation. Beech and oak give way to olive, cypress and palm. Blue sea and sky are more frequently found here than anywhere else in

The Eastern Pyrenees

Europe, and the absence of tide makes it possible to bathe all day long.

Both the olive and palm tree were mentioned by Pliny, though only the dwarf palm is really indigenous to the French Mediterranean coast. According to Pliny the olive belt extended for 50 miles inland, much as it does to-day. It provides for the more elementary needs of the population, and is to the dwellers by the Mediterranean as are the pig and potato patch to the Irish.

The capital of the Eastern Pyrenees is the somewhat dusty town of Perpignan. It has an unsatisfactory aspect, interesting in bits, though it seems to have forgotten to build anything modern in the place of the once soul-satisfying walls. This perhaps is just as well, as it gets one away from the town up among the hills, or out on the broad blue sea. The Cathedral, the Loge, and the Vauban Citadel are the chief "sights."

Between Perpignan and Narbonne are many beautiful lagoons running parallel to the coast, where tiny fishing boats may be seen collecting their catch from stake nets. The old Spanish fort built at the end of the fifteenth century, at Salces, is one of the most picturesque buildings in the vicinity of La Franqui, the *plage* of Narbonne. Like the Lagoon of Thau at Cette, Salces Lagoon is separated from the Mediterranean by a narrow strip of sand. Between Perpignan and the Spanish frontier Banyuls and Port Vendres are pretty blue bays dotted with the white wings of lateen-sailed fishing craft. Here and there are

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white villages. A blue haze is spread over the turquoise sea. Away inland, one sees the wizard of all this district the Canigou, a sacred mountain dominating the entire country like Fusijama. The most delightful spot on the sea-board of the Eastern Pyrenees from the point of view of the artist is Collioure. One finds here not only a fleet of sailing boats employed in the tunny, sardine and anchovy fishery, but a Castle built originally by the Knights Templars and modernised by Vauban. Once the flourishing seaport of the ancient town of Elne, Collioure has degenerated into a fishing port. Lateen-rigged smacks are now hauled out on the hard, a former retreat of Greek and Roman galleys. At Collioure one feels better than anywhere else in the Eastern Pyrenees the romance and glory of antiquity. One can shut one's eyes and hear the splash of the oars of the great galleys bound from Civita Vecchia to Carthagera, for the Roman galleys were coasting craft, hauled out of the water every night, in exactly the same manner as the fishing craft of Collioure to-day. And there is very little difference between the rig or build of the galleys and crews of ancient Rome and the tunny boats and fishers of modern Collioure. Port Vendres, the ancient Portus Veneris, is the deep seaport of the Eastern Pyrenees, having steamer communication with Algeria. Banyuls is the bathing resort of what its inhabitants would have one call the Vermilion Coast. Along the Vermilion Corniche are some admirable views ranging from the Cevennes to the Pyrenees, and seaward the Latin

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Lake, either studded with white-sailed craft winging slowly home to harbour where the lazy waves curl in from the sea, or lashed into white crested combers by the furious onslaught of the *mistral*.

Inland the Canigou beckons one away from the opal sea to seek the repose of its snowy flanks. Mr. Rudyard Kipling, who is seldom moved by scenery out of the British Empire, found a deal of good to say about the Canigou. No doubt he was fascinated by its Himalayan aspect, in the same way as Lord Roberts, who was a visitor to Vernet. Though the warmest resort in the Eastern Pyrenees, Amelie les Bains, a pleasant enough place of its kind, has not been much visited by English or American travellers. Vernet is the chief centre for foreigners in the Eastern Pyrenees, and though none too warm in winter it has the advantage of being an all-the-year-round resort, at its best in spring. The chief attraction of Vernet is the number of easy mountain tours to be made either by rail, road, or afoot among the Pyrenees. Of Font Romeu, the latest Pyrenean winter and summer resort, I will speak in the next chapter.

Let us take the road once more and trek away up into the hills to Vauban's stronghold of Montlouis, after taking a look at such typical villages as St. Michel de Cuxa, Prades, or the frontier post of Prats de Mollo, the scene of many a skirmish in old days, and of deceptions and lost causes in modern times. Montlouis has the reputation of being the highest and coldest garrison town in

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France, and I think it is the farthest south after Toulon. Dunkirk is the most northern garrison town and bitterly cold, but those who have wintered in both, prefer Dunkirk. Let us therefore not linger at Montlouis, but set out by the forest road to Odeillo and on to Bourg-Madame. The last town in France, Bourg-Madame was so re-christened by the Duc d'Angoulême, when it appealed to him for a better name than La Guinguette, the "pot house."

Entirely enclosed in French territory but for a neutral road, is the Spanish "town" of Llivia. To-day a hamlet of under a thousand inhabitants Llivia was once a town, and, when by the Treaty of the Pyrenees Spain contracted to give up to France 33 villages in the Cerdagne, Llivia, being a town, was retained by Spain. Puigcerda, the first Spanish town over the border, is quite an interesting place. Like most frontier towns it is intensely Spanish, and well worth a visit. In summer a number of visitors come up from Barcelona to Puigcerda to take advantage of the cool mountain air after the heat of the city. Puigcerda then becomes gay with bright frocks and military uniforms.

Andorra, a Republic set as a saddle astride the Pyrenees, is a slipping saddle. It slips geographically towards the south, most of its territory being south of the range, but politically it is slipping to France, whence it derives most of its little luxuries, postal especially. The secret of the fierce independence of Andorra lies in the fact that its citizens are exempt from

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military service in either France or Spain. Much of the romance of Andorra has left it, for a road now enables one to shake hands with the President out of a motor car, instead of riding up on mule-back. Nevertheless, they still grow tobacco in Andorra for the benefit of French or Spanish smokers who cannot stomach the official blends of their country. Andorra is still under the suzerainty of the President of the French Republic and the Bishop of La Seo de Urgel. But it is in a transition stage, its inhabitants, though vastly proud of its being the oldest Republic in the world, admit that their situation is an anomaly. The modern Adorrans are beginning to yearn for better days than those vouchsafed to smugglers and shepherds. Only taxation both in blood and money stops the Republic of Andorra from asking its admission to the bosom of the great French Republic. Would you see Andorra and its pastoral citizens in all their old-world charm of manner, would you see their humble mode of living, and be received in the good old way of mule-back travellers? If so, you must lose no time. And the antiquarian, the artist, the student of men and manners will find much that he will see nowhere else than in this queer little Pyrenean Republic. The present arrangement dates from 1278 when the quarrel between the rival suzerains, the Bishops of Urgel and the Counts of Foix, was settled by the Adorrans agreeing to pay tribute to both countries, not very arduous tribute, for the French share is less than a thousand francs. Several attempts have



OLD PYRENEAN

THE ANCIENT REPUBLIC OF ANDORRA

The oldest republic in the world. The artist, the antiquarian, the student of men and manners will find much that he will see nowhere else than in this queer little Pyrenean Republic.

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been made to take advantage of the unique situation of Andorra to turn the State into a rival Monte Carlo, but the sturdy mountaineers will have none of the fickle Goddess of Chance within their territory.

CHAPTER IX

WINTER SPORTS

Winter Sports at Font-Romeu and Superbagnères—
Fishing, &c.

WHILE it is possible to indulge in ski-running at several points in the Pyrenees, notably Caunterets and Eaux Bonnes, the chief Winter-Sports resorts of the range are Font-Romeu in the Eastern Pyrenees, and Superbagnères above Luchon. The latter is most in vogue with those who place winter sports before everything else. Though both stations are at the same altitude, 5906 feet, they have quite distinct characteristics, one being situated on the Mediterranean slope, and the other on that of the Atlantic. Both places are due to the initiative of the Société des Chemins de Fer et Hôtels de Montagne aux Pyrénées. The difference between the two resorts amounts to this. By its situation on the sun-kissed slopes of the Cerdagne, Font-Romeu is an admirable health resort amid snow-clad mountains with facilities for winter sports from Christmas till mid February, while Superbagnères, on a snow-bound plateau in the very centre of the High Pyrenees is the resort for those who come



Photo Ford

Pau

AN OLD STREET IN ST. JEAN DE LUZ

The house with the square tower is the Maison Esquerenea, the oldest in the town.

Winter Sports

abroad essentially for winter sports. One might perhaps go further and state that Font-Romeu is a dilettante, and Superbagnères a strenuous resort. Both places have large hotels owned by the Company and are charming mountain resorts both in summer and winter. Montlouis, the Capcir, the Carlitte and Puigmal provide a wide field for the ski-runner at Font-Romeu, while at Superbagnères the same sport may be practised 7874 feet up on the Pic de Cecire. Ski, lugeing, bobsleigh, sledge, hockey, curling and skating are included in the annual programme of both stations, while an electric railway takes up apparatus and sportsmen at Superbagnères. Font-Romeu, which, by the way, has now a golf course, indulges in ski-jöring, while Superbagnères is proud of her jumps.

The French Customs officials at Gabas, above Eaux Chaudes, patrol the frontier on ski in the winter, and there is a small ski club at Pau who carry out excursions in the Pyrenees above Eaux Bonnes.

With regard to climbing and mountaineering in summer, the best places to find guides and use as bases, as I have already pointed out, are Gavarnie and Luchon.

Bears are still found in the Pyrenees, notably above Gabas. They are also found in the Ariège, where a local nimrod, Monsieur Authier, has accounted for thirteen bears and five hundred wild boars in his day. The izard, or Pyrenean chamois, is still comparatively common amid the higher peaks, but this is a very fatiguing form of sport,

Winter Sports

a combination of stalking and rock climbing. The list of game found in the valleys includes quail, pigeon, and snipe.

It is difficult to recommend suitable quarters for shooting or fishing as local conditions change so rapidly. One spends a fortnight in an excellent inn with woodcock in proximity. Next year the cock cover has been turned into "desirable building lots" at "Something-or-other-les-Pyrénées"; the excellent chef who made the local inn a little paradise has quarrelled with the management and left for a rival establishment. It is much the same with the fishing. In both cases one cannot go far wrong in seeking the advice of the Shooting or Angling Editor, as the case may be, of *The Field*. No publication in the world is kept better posted in fishing matters than *Where to Fish*, published by *The Field*, and a letter, or a call, at the *Field* office, will always be productive of some excellent advice.

There are salmon in the Nive between Cambo and the confluence with the Adour at Bayonne, but the best rivers for salmon are the Gave de Pau and the Gave d'Oloron, fishing with a Devon minnow: I have never heard of anyone taking them with a fly. Great efforts are being made to preserve these waters and to encourage salmon fishing in the vicinity of Pau. Probably useful information could be obtained from the English Club at Pau.

Owing to the fact that the streams of the Eastern Pyrenees lack water, being practically

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mountain torrents, in summer, they should be fished in the spring. The trout fisherman, then, should begin his season in the east and work across to the Bay of Biscay. Trout fishing in the Eastern Pyrenees begins in March or at the end of February and is little good after the middle of May. But the water by that time is good in the western rivers and can be fished until July 30th. The lakes above Luz, and the Lac d'Estaing above Argelès, are good in August: a boat may be hired on the latter. Lakes are difficult things to write about for they are always being tapped for electric power schemes, and what is excellent trout water one year may be entirely devoid of fish the next.

The dry-fly fisherman will find Argelès a very good centre, while Cambo is as good a spot as any for the wet-fly fisherman, the Nive having good pools up to Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port. Sea trout run up the Nivelle.

Melting snow is the chief source of trouble in the Pyrenees and it is very necessary to ascertain the usual periods when snow water comes down the different streams. A certain amount of general information is available in London at the Office Français du Tourisme, 56 Haymarket, S.W.1. But the angler who is really keen would be well advised to join the Casting Club de France, 2 Rue de Clichy, Paris. The subscription is but a trifling one, and the advantages of membership great. The club has agents in a great many fishing centres and publishes a useful annual.

Sea fishing on the Mediterranean coast of the

Winter Sports

Pyrenees is not over productive of sport, though some of the lagoons contain bass, but the mosquitoes are very trying and one must beware of fever. On the Biscay coast there is reported to be good bass fishing from the breakwater off Saint Jean-de-Luz ; and I have seen some very nice grey mullet caught at the mouth of the River Urumea, at San Sebastian, in a spot called "Rompe Olas." The hardy navigator who fears not to face the long blue rollers of the Bay of Biscay will find both whiting and mackerel, in their seasons, off the coasts of France and Spain.

In any case, ashore and afloat, whether one catches a record basket of bass or mullet, or whether one whips the streams of Navarre and Catalonia in vain, one will never find more beautiful surroundings among which to fish than in the Pyrenees.

To have fished the mountain streams that hasten down from the snowy heights to the blue billows of the Bay of Biscay, to have rested from the noon heat in the grateful shade of a pine coppice by the river bank with great mountains enclosing the valley on three sides, are experiences worth coming far to enjoy.



Photo

Buille

LA TOUR DE CAROL
A quaint corner of the Eastern Pyrenees.

CHAPTER X

THE SPANISH PYRENEES

Fuenterrabia—Irun—Pasajes—San Sebastian—The Coast
to Bilbao—Bull Fighting—Pamplona and Navarre

FOR a week, the peaks of the Cantabrian Mountains had been beckoning me to Spain. At length, one sunny day of early spring, I succumbed to their lure, and crossed the waters of the historical Bidassoa. For I scorned to enter so romantic a land in the dusty compartment of a prosaic train.

Of no little charm did I find the frontier river. After a rapid course through the Mountains of Navarre, it widens into a broad estuary, here silver, here green, dappled with golden sandbanks. A sturdy little blue-capped Basque rowed me across. Fishermen use the river mainly for the purpose of smuggling, and on its banks Pierre Loti made his home. I once rowed up as far as Irun, past the crumbling Ile des Faisans, on which Mazarin and Luis de Haro met in a series of conferences which led to the Peace of the Pyrenees, and at which Velasquez, who supervised the arrangement of the tents and hangings, contracted the fever which killed him. On the

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same island, which is now neutral ground, Louis XI of France met Henry IV of Spain, and shocked the gorgeous Spaniards by the meanness of his dress. In 1615 a strange matrimonial deal was put through on the island, the ambassadors of France and Spain exchanging Isabel, daughter of Henry IV of France, for Anne of Austria, sister of Philip IV of Spain. A sight I would have given much to see was the exchange of Francis I of France, taken prisoner by the Spaniards at the Battle of Pavia, for his two sons, whom he gave as hostages. This ceremony took place, not on the island, but on board a State barge moored in the middle of the river, and was carried out with all the pomp and pageantry of the times.

No sooner had I set foot on Spanish soil, than I was accosted by a *carabinero*, cigarette in mouth. Having assured him of my honesty, I passed up through a gateway, above which is set a massive coat of arms, into my first Spanish town. Nothing is more strange than the contrast on crossing the frontier. France might be a thousand miles away, France, aye, even Europe (a no empty saying is that which has it "that Africa begins at the Pyrenees"). Quite theatrical are the streets of Fuenterrabia. Nowhere can be seen such balconies, such overhanging roofs, such shadowy streets. But the inhabitants were the most striking: swarthy were they, short, and quite African in countenance.

Like most frontier towns, Fuenterrabia has seen stirring times. It was taken by Francis I of France in 1521, and during a siege by Condé

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in 1638, withstood twenty assaults in sixty-four days. Silver coins and jewellery were converted into bullets. Every year, in commemoration of the deliverance of the City by Calvera, Admiral of Castille, is held a series of "fêtes" at the chapel of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe above the town. How much more enjoyable than the prosaic railway train or dusty road was this means of entering Spain by boat I was to find on going up to Irun, the frontier town. A place of no little commercial importance but none the more pleasant for that. From Irun a motor service runs up the valley of the Bidassoa to Elizondo in Navarre, linking up with the Bayonne-Pamplona road. Twenty years ago trout were plentiful up the Bidassoa and many pleasant weeks could be spent among the mountain glens of Navarre, stopping at river-side inns at a trifling cost.

From Fuenterrabia a good walker can make a delightful excursion over the hills past the sanctuary and chapel of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe and down to Pasajes. Approached from the sea, Pasajes is more Norwegian in aspect than Spanish, a timber barque with windmill pump and old patched sails, or a square-sailed *jagter*, is alone missing to complete the illusion. Once through the narrow fjord-like entrance, however, we are in Spain at once. Above us tower rocky heights, it is true, but they are of Spain, not Scandinavia, while the villages are typical of the south. On the starboard hand we have San Pedro, to port San Juan; ahead

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of us is a vast land-locked bay. Facing the entrance is Ancho, with railway wharves, cranes and all the apparatus of a modern commercial harbour. This is undoubtedly the best port on the coast, though it should not be attempted in rough weather, as the seas roll across the entrance from the western reefs, breaking on Las Cruces Point. Being a wine and mineral port, Pasajes is in constant communication with the principal towns of England and France. At San Juan is a pleasant little inn overlooking the harbour, where they will cook you a bass as well as anywhere I know, while their omelettes (*tortilla*) are far superior to the overrated products of the Mont-Saint-Michel, in Normandy. The wine is *Rioja*, from Logroño. In a house near by, Victor Hugo spent part of his exile, and it was from Pasajes that Lafayette sailed for America. At San Juan, on St. John's Eve (June 23rd) great rejoicings are held in honour of the patron saint, and the fisher folk abandon themselves body and soul to dancing and feasting.

San Sebastian is a charming place, combining sea, mountains and town. The bathing is of the best, and the Casino in the summer months, when the Court is in residence, provides a varied programme of entertainments. In fact one finds at San Sebastian first-class hotels, handsome shops, and all the luxury of a great Riviera resort, with the added attraction of the charm and grace of the Basques, and facilities for studying some of the manners, customs and *cosas d'España*. At San Sebastian the whole town



Photo

THE LOVELY BAY OF SAN SEBASTIAN

Spanish Bay.

A fashionable watering place at the western extremity of the Spanish Pyrenees, and the summer residence of the Spanish Royal Family and Court. The Island of Santa Clara, set in the narrow mouth of the bay, provides shelter for a fleet of yachts.

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meets in the evening, about seven, to stroll up and down the Alameda or promenade. The sight is a gay one, especially after a bull-fight. On these occasions, I never failed to secure a seat in one of the cafés that face the Alameda. No sooner was I seated, than a shoeblack would seize my legs and begin to black or brown my shoes ; I soon learned the futility of resistance. It was the same way with the flower girl, who would stick a flower in my button-hole with the greatest sang-froid, keeping up a running fire of witty chaff until she had pinned it securely in position. Those who know the "*floristas*" of Spain are able to understand the romance of Nell Gwynn. This girl, and her comrades, follow the Court from Madrid to San Sebastian every summer, as regularly as the Cabinet and members of the Royal Household. From my little table, I had an interesting view of the human "film" that was being unrolled in the Alameda. Now and again, proud in their picturesque dress, there passed bull-fighters. A crowd of *aficionados* of all classes, including caramel boys, followed them about. They were the heroes of the hour.

Owing to sieges in the Peninsular and Carlist Wars there is more of modern than ancient San Sebastian to be seen. In 1813 the Iron Duke laid siege to San Sebastian which was defended by General Bey and three thousand veterans. After losing the main part of the fortifications—and the town—the French retired to the Castillo de la Mota and held out for a long time. Near

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the castle on the Monte Orgullo facing the blue Bay of Biscay are the graves of British soldiers who fell in the siege, as well as members of the British Legion who were killed in the Carlist War of 1835-36.

The walk round the point upon which is built the Castillo de la Mota is very charming, and the best means of obtaining an idea of the town. San Sebastian is really built on an isthmus with a bay on one side and an estuary on the other, the whole set in a semicircle of hills. From the bay, or *concha*, rises an islet, Isla de Santa Clara, a pleasant spot for a picnic. Although foreign steamers prefer the port of Pasajes, many fishing craft make San Sebastian their harbour, and in summer the *concha* is dotted with yachts. A funicular railway takes one up to Mount Ulia to enjoy the splendid panorama of sea and mountains.

At all the little places round San Sebastian, in contrast to the rest of Spain, one can always find a clean restaurant capable of turning out a modest but well-cooked meal. An excellent service of electric trams and motor omnibuses enables one to visit the neighbouring villages with a minimum of fatigue and expense. The Spaniards are the most delightful of people and do all in their power to make the foreigner at home; but I am afraid that social intercourse in Spain has lost all the characteristics described by Ford. As a rule the Spaniard rises rather late, and in Andalusia and Madrid the people never seem to go to bed at all. A small cup of thick chocolate flavoured

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with cinnamon, with a couple of rusks, forms the early breakfast ; it is taken in the bedroom, and called *desayuno*. Lunch, *almuerzo*, is served at about one o'clock, and except in the difference in the way it is prepared, is similar in style to the same meal in other parts of the Continent. During the afternoon, chocolate, or ices, or sugary drinks, known as *refrescoes*, are partaken of in a *café*. Eight o'clock, or even later, is the hour of the evening meal, *comida*.

Wishing to learn something of the Basque methods of fishing and to explore this magnificent coast from the sea I set out to hire a boat, and was directed to a pilot who was to be found at the sign of the Planet in the *Calle del Puerto*. A dingy tavern was El Planeta, in the dirtiest part of the town. On inquiring for the pilot of a group of mariners thumping dominoes on a small table, I was told that he was at sea. On the following day I was more successful, and we took a trial trip. The boat was a *lancha* similar to those I have described at Biarritz. She was an unsatisfactory craft, as even with the aid of a helping oar she declined to go to windward ; nevertheless she gave me some pleasant hours out among the long green Biscay rollers. Several times we shot a seine for sardines, and the smuggling yarns of a fat fisherman named Baldomero were always worth listening to. The *lancha*, like most craft in Latin countries, was carvel built, and innocent of a rudder, being steered Viking fashion with an oar over the quarter, for she was sharp sterned. The weather changes with great suddenness on

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this coast, and I met with samples of all kinds. One day we had just left the harbour when Baldomero espied a bank of fog creeping in from the horizon, and before we were ashore the peaks of the mountains had their nightcaps well down over their ears. Twice we were caught in the sudden squalls that swoop down from the high shores, but as the boat was under oars no harm was done. Thunderstorms are very frequent on the coast, but the *galernas* and *borrascas* are apt to get exaggerated in print.

The River Urumea is not navigable, as its mouth is completely silted up and gives rise to a kind of tidal bore at high-water springs. On the reaches above the town a certain amount of fresh water boating is indulged in, and the country is very pretty. Grey mullet frequent the mouth of the Urumea, and I have seen some good fish taken from the sea wall. But it is a very public spot, and the boys make fishing almost impossible, at least they did for me; I prefer seclusion for my fishing. The average Spaniard can never understand that anybody with enough money to fill his stomach should want to take any form of physical exercise, even fishing. Work in any form, even playing at work, is anathema to the Spanish "workman," bull-fighting and politics excepted.

San Sebastian being a steam-trawling port, a visit to the fish market is often interesting, for fish never seen in England are displayed for sale. The fishing creeks (they are hardly ports) farther west, until we reach the Nervion, are as



Foto

SHEPHERDESS TENDING HER FLOCK IN THE HIGH PYRENEES

Buile

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picturesque as they are dangerous to any craft that cannot be beached or hauled out.

Before proceeding along the coast to Bilbao let us follow up the Urumea river through Martutene to the romantic mediæval town of Hernani. Here, I was once permitted to watch a most interesting fencing tournament between officers of the different arms of the garrison of Saint Sebastian. The bouts took place in an old-world garden on the outskirts of the town, and with the clash of steel in my ears I felt that I was witnessing some terrific combat of Old Castile, or a sword and cloak play by Lope de Vega. Beautiful wrought-iron balconies and coats of arms adorn the houses of the ancient streets of Hernani. In the church of San Juan Bautista is the tomb of Juan de Urbieta, who took prisoner Francis I at the battle of Pavia in 1525. In 1836 Hernani was the scene of a fierce battle in the Carlist War when the British Legion under General Sir de Lacy Evans were badly cut up. The Barrio de los Fueros and the Calle Mayor are among my most pleasant memories of Spain.

Another good excursion is up the valley of the Oria to the former capital of the province of Guipozcoa, Tolosa, a typically Spanish town with an interesting church and considerable paper mills. Vitoria, the scene of Wellington's victory over King Joseph and Jourdan, lies further up the main line to Madrid.

One of the best ways of seeing the lovely country of the Spanish Basques is to take the

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coast road to Bilbao and return to San Sebastian by way of Durango. A fat volume could be filled with the praise of this wonderful land of sea and mountain, of lofty peaks and ferny dells, of shaggy shepherds and hardy mariners; of red-roofed farms and the great cupolas and domes of *palacios* perched above the silver streams, villages with domed churches and balconied houses nestling in a green fold of the hills, or fishing boats drawn up in a cove, with brown sails and nets drying in the breeze, with, over all, white clouds chasing in from the blue Atlantic across the bluer sky.

Within a few miles of San Sebastian is the bathing resort of Zarauz with a quaint fourteenth-century tower and the fifteenth-century Palacio of the Marques de Narros, whence Isabella II went into exile in France in 1868.

Many Spanish names begin with the letter Z, which is pronounced in pure Castilian like our "th," thus Zarauz should be pronounced Tharauth, the same applies to the letter "D" after a vowel, so that Valladolid is pronounced Valyadoleeth. *Palacio* literally means a palace, but it is in practice used to designate what we should call a country house, in the same way its French counterpart *château* means not a castle in the English sense of the word but a country mansion.

Three miles further along the coast bring us to the very picturesque little fishing cove of Gue-taria. Not only remarkable for the delightful groups of boats and fishermen about the harbour and the curious isthmus, or island joined to the



Photo

Col. Fitherton

A PICTURESQUE CHURCH, BUILT IN THE CATALAN STYLE

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land by the causeway of San Anton, Guetaria will always be famous as the birthplace of the first circumnavigator of the world, Juan Sebastian del Cano. A Portugese in the Spanish service, Magalhaens, sailed from San Lucar at the mouth of the Guadalquivir on September 20th, 1519, in order to prove that the world was round. Magalhaens was killed in the Philippines by the natives on April 17th, 1521, and del Cano in the *Vittoria*, the only remaining ship of five, made San Lucar once more on September 6th, 1522, after circumnavigating the globe. A statue of del Cano stands, looking seaward, across the little fishing harbour. He died and was buried at sea while crossing the Pacific from east to west on August 4th, 1526.

Zumaya is the next bathing cove, the summer home of the Basque painter Zuloaga. Some three miles further on we can turn up inland to the Spa of Cestona where the springs have been in vogue since 1784. This is quite a resort of fashionable folk and has a casino attached to the Baths. The mountain of Itzarraitz separates us from Azpeitia and the birthplace of San Ignacio de Loyola, founder of the Jesuits. There are some ancient buildings at Azpeitia, a prettily situated village among green hills on the banks of the Urola, close to the Sanctuary of San Ignacio de Loyola. The monastery was built on the site of the house in which Loyola was born in 1491, by Mariana of Austria, widow of Philip IV, under the direction of Fontana the Papal architect, the foundation stone being laid on

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March 28th, 1689. An old tower is all that remains of the ancient manor of Loyola's ancestors. After spending his youth as a page at the Court of Ferdinand V of Spain, Loyola became an officer in the army. Wounded in both legs at the siege of Pamplona in 1521, he gave himself up to a life of devotion and made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. On August 16th, 1534, Loyola founded in Paris his Society or Company of Jesus, but it was not until three years later that the Society was confirmed by a Bull of Pope Paul III. Saint Ignatius Loyola died on July 31st, 1556. No religious institution has wielded greater power than the Society of Jesus, and no religious body has undergone greater persecution than the Jesuits.

From Azpeitia one can either return to San Sebastian over the Col de Regil and down through Tolosa, or run back to the coast and proceed to Bilbao. It is usual to run along the coast to Bilbao from Deva and take the inland route back from Bilbao to Deva by way of Durango. Situated at the mouth of the river of the same name, Deva is very like an estuary town in Devon or Cornwall with hills shrouded in soft haze, a stone bridge across the river, and shipping lying in the tideway. The river is one of the prettiest in this beautiful country. Beyond the little fishing cove of Motrico (birthplace of Churruca who was killed in the Battle of Trafalgar), one crosses another river, the Marquina, and passes out of the Province of Guipuzcoa into that of Vizcaya or Biscay. There is generally as much activity on the part

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of the "*migueletes*" or provincial militia as if one were crossing the frontier from France into Spain, instead of passing from one Spanish province to another. The secret is the levying of octroi duties. The "*migueletes*," as they are called in the Province of Guipuzcoa, or "*minoñes*" in Vizcaya and Alava, add much to the picturesqueness of the railway stations of the Basque country, where they carry on police duty, and collect the provincial tax, or "octroi" duty. Their uniform consists of a red flat cap, with a brass disk in the centre, and blue cape and red trousers. There are only infantry. In Alava and Vizcaya, they wear white caps, and there are cavalry as well. Very proud are the Basques of their militia, and it has ever been their boast that they can put into the field as many men as the Government may require. They cannot be ordered for service out of their province, but can volunteer for foreign service, as they did in the war with the United States. As in France, "Pelota" is the national game of the Spanish Basques. Another popular amusement among the Spanish working classes and peasantry is cock-fighting: here again betting is carried on in a way that must rival the State Lottery.

Ondarroa is quite one of the most picturesque fishing villages on the coast, with a big fleet of fishing boats and curious houses. Another quaint little seaside hamlet is Lequeitio. Before reaching the considerable fishing village of Bermeo one comes across the River Mundaca. Higher up this valley is Guernica where the Deputies of Vizcaya

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were wont to meet in solemn conclave under an ancient oak tree. *Guernikako Arbola*, a song written by José Maria Iparraguirre, is the national anthem of the Basques. Practically independent until after the Carlist Wars of 1876, the Basques are very proud of their history and ancient rights called *fueros*; they are essentially Basque first and Spanish afterwards. One might call this Oak of Guernica, the Blarney Stone of the Basques.

On the alternative route between Deva and Bilbao lie Durango, a small town containing the oldest church in the Basque Provinces, and Eibar where they make the inlaid cutlery and jewellery one finds all over Spain.

Coming along the coast one reaches the seaside suburb of Bilbao, Las Arenas; as its name implies, it is a fine sandy beach, with grand waves rolling in from the Atlantic. A flying ferry crosses a transporter bridge, the Puente Vizcaya, to Portugalete, a port at the mouth of the Nervion, where most of the British colony of Bilbao reside. Here also is the Yacht Club. Several moles and breakwaters have done much to tame the Bay of Biscay and make it possible for shipping to cross the bar and proceed up the Nervion to load iron ore. Although they are not in the Pyrenees, no one should leave Bilbao without visiting Castro Urdiales, Laredo, and Santona, three very picturesque fishing coves on the way to Santander.

One cannot visit Spain without seeing a bull-fight, and it was at Bilbao that I was first sent



Centre Excursionista

de Catalunya

A PASTORAL SCENE

On the forest-clad slopes of the Spanish Pyrenees where the great range meets the Mediterranean in Catalonia. The vegetation on the southern side of the Pyrenees is more luxuriant than on the northern slopes.

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to witness a *Corrida* in the company of a friend's retired butler who had been a *banderillero* of note in his day. I am not going to attempt to describe a bull-fight, in detail. It consists of three acts : first the horse killing, when the *picadores* take the edge off the bull's appetite with their horses, or goad him on with their lances, then the *banderilleros*, who stick darts in the bull, and finally the *matador* who, clad in silk stockings and dancing-pumps, faces the bull with a red rag round a piece of stick in his left hand and a sword in the other. When the *matador* has enticed the bull into the position he requires with the red rag he kills it with his sword. The bull should fall stone dead without moving. More has been written about *Tauromachia* than about Boxiana or Fox Hunting. It has many aspects. Without the killing of horses it would be sport. But one cannot have the one without the other. Not to have seen a bull-fight is not to have seen Spain, and not to have seen a bull-fight in the company of a Spaniard is not to have seen a bull-fight. It is impossible to initiate the reader into the various strokes and passes that make bull-fighting almost a science. A "*primera espada*" generally retires, or "cuts his pig-tail," as "the fancy" have it, at about fifty-five. A few then start training-schools for young "*espadas*," but most live on their handsome earnings. Formerly, there was an official school of bull-fighting, but now, the young men pick up the art as best they can by practising on bulls at the slaughter-houses in big towns. It is quite untrue to say that bull-fighting

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is dying out; nothing is further from the truth. New rings are often opened in big towns, and special illustrated papers are devoted entirely to bull-fights. The cinema rights are sold as at boxing matches. So deeply rooted in the national life is bull-fighting, that nothing will ever stop it; it would be easier to forbid football or horse racing in England. Queen Isabella tried to stop it and failed, as did Pope Pius V, who issued a "Bull" which was ignored.

A bull-fighter is ever in the glare of the lime-light. He is acclaimed everywhere; his reception is almost regal when he appears to show his skill in the ring. As a mark of his calling, his hair is always dressed with a pig-tail, which he never cuts off until he retires from his profession. In his private life he is far more of an actor than an athlete; perhaps he is best compared to the modern boxer. Many have retired with large fortunes, and live in great luxury at Seville or Cordova.

Bilbao is too wealthy to enable one to conjure up any pictures of the long gone days of "trusty bilboes" and true-lovers' knots. Indeed there is nothing of Shakespeare or Good Queen Bess about Bilbao to-day. It is an essentially modern town, exporting millions of tons of iron ore annually mostly in rusty old Tyneside tramps, flying a patched and grimy "red-duster," innocent of paint, and manned by a sturdy crew of hard swearing, hard drinking "Geordies" of the Captain Kettle type. Most of the iron ore trade is in the hands of Englishmen, who have

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established an excellent Sports Club. During my short stay in the city, I met a young Englishman fresh out from I forget which University, who taught his Spanish clerks to row every evening, that they might compete in the local regatta.

My hotel was situated on one of those squares of high houses, with arcaded streets that one always associates with Spanish towns.

Founded by Diego Lopez de Haro, Lord of Biscay in 1300, Bilbao was a good deal knocked about by the Carlists, who, however, never captured the town either in the War of 1833 or in that of 1874.

From Bilbao one will do well to look at Pamplona, the capital of Navarre, travelling by way of Vergara and Zumarraga. It was at the former town that Espartero concluded the peace with the Carlists that ended the first War in 1839. All the Basques provinces are full of memories of the Carlist Wars that were the result of Napoleon's meddling with Spanish affairs (see Bayonne). At Ormaiztegui, where there are sulphur springs, was born one of the fiercest of the Carlist leaders, Zumalacarregui. At Zumaraga were born three Basque heroes, Miguel Lopez de Legazpi, who conquered the Philippines in 1569; José Maria Iparraguirre, author of the Basque national anthem, "The tree of Guernica"; and Gaspar de Jauregui, who fought against the French in 1810-13 and against the Carlists in 1833.

Travelling by train in the Spanish Pyrenees gives one plenty of time to study the scenery and

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local types. Expresses unprovided with restaurant cars stop for half an hour at meal times at some station where there is a "*fonda*," or "*buffet*." The trains waste an incredible amount of time at stations. Before a train can start, three bells are rung: first, a warning bell hung near the station-master's office, then a porter walks slowly the whole length of the train, ringing a hand-bell, and howling in a kind of chant "*Señores viajeros al tren*," the equivalent for "take your seats." Then the bell is rung again, and if one is in luck, the train starts.

A "*Guardia Civil*," or gendarme, travels on each train, a relic of the days of José-Maria, for it is this corps that has stamped out brigandage. They are the best force of this kind in existence. All are old soldiers, though they are not old men. There are foot and mounted men. Steady and severe, though doing police work, they form a part of the regular army; they always work in couples, a young man and a veteran, the former to supply dash, the latter, ballast. They have power to shoot after giving one warning, "*Alto*," "hands up," and no questions asked by the civil authorities for they are under the War Office. Their workaday uniform is a kind of green, but on "gala" days they wear a black tunic with red and yellow facings, white breeches, and a three-cornered hat. This, on week days, in common with the head-dress of all Spanish uniforms, is covered with a black waterproof cover. "*La Guardia Civil*" are the only police with a sense of the picturesque: they lend romance alike to

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river or mountain, and I cannot think of Spain without them. They stand for law and order in a land of the knife. To them the tourist owes the freedom of the road and the extermination of the "*bandolero*." They are, alas ! by no means the only police, though the only effective ones. Next to them in power come the "*Guardias del Orden publico*," a kind of political police under the Ministry of the Interior. They are strict, and great busybodies, and the best-hated men in Spain. The Municipal Police are seldom taken seriously ; they are dressed in long blue coats and helmets, in most towns, feeble copies of our English uniforms. They carry a stick to whack "drunks" and small boys, and are known as "*cerradores*," "lockers-up." At night, their place is taken by watchmen called "*serenos*," from the fact that they used to cry, and still do so in the small towns and villages, the hours, ending with the words "*y todo sereno*," "and all is well" (serene). They have the keys of all the houses on their beat, a great comfort to diners out. All kinds of amusing stories are told of their comments on the nocturnal doings of their fellow townsmen cried aloud under the moon. Such as "two o'clock of a thirsty night, Old Antonio not home yet !" and later, "three o'clock, and his wife is still thrashing Antonio, who came home as drunk as a lord !" Such are the tales one hears of *serenos* in small places. I should add that they carry spears or pikes, and wear soft slippers, an idea that might be copied to advantage by our London police.

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Specimens of all these police encumber the railway stations throughout Spain. Stay! but I have forgotten to tell you of the *carabinero*. He examined our luggage just now. They not only guard the frontier on horseback and on foot, but collect the Government octroi duty or food tax in every town. It is this tax that is so unpopular and falls so heavily on the poor; a promise of its repeal is a sure vote-catcher, but once in office the politician quickly forgets. The "*carabineros*" get a bounty, or commission, on all smuggled goods they seize. Every maid-servant in Spain hopes to marry a "*carabinero*." Like the "*Guardia Civil*," the "*carabinero*" always carries his rifle with him (I believe they take them to bed with them), and form part of the regular army. There are also "*Carabineros de Mar*" and "*Guardia Costas*," who belong to the navy, and prevent smuggling by sea.

Before undertaking a journey in Spain, it is strongly advisable to take a few lessons in Spanish; no language is easier to pick up, especially to one having a slight knowledge of Latin or Italian or even French, though Frenchmen never speak Spanish well. In the hotels, it is true, French and English are generally spoken by some member of the staff, but it is terrible to be tied to an interpreter all day, for no greater kill-joys exist. If the traveller be in a hurry, it will pay him to engage some one to guide him round the larger cities, or he will miss half the "sights" in his haste. The man of leisure, however, will enjoy finding things out for himself.

The Spanish Pyrenees

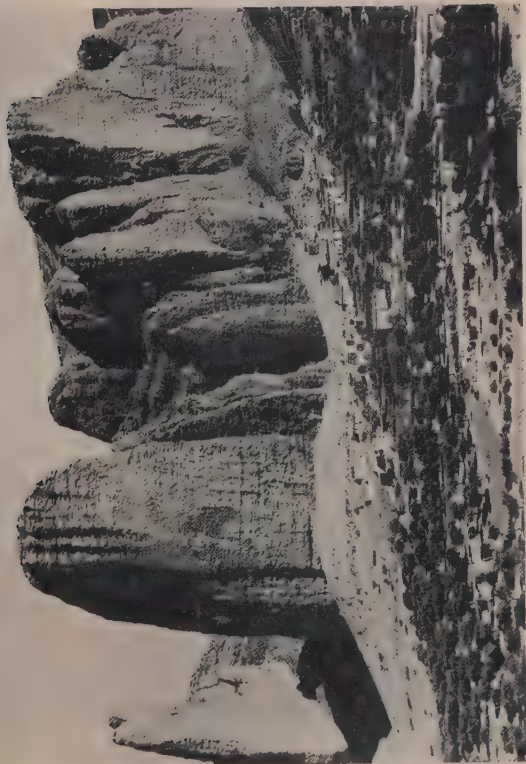
Meals in the station *fondas* or *buffets* have much improved of late years, though some of the delicacies are not likely to suit English tastes. Any dish with rice is sure to be good : “ *Pollo con Arroz* ” and “ *Arroz a la Valenciana* ” are among my happiest gastronomic souvenirs. The omelettes, “ *tortilla*,” are the best in the world, far superior to the French, and though Frenchmen indignantly deny it, the wine, at the average Spanish table d’hôte, is more pleasant to drink than the sour “ *vin d’Algérie* ” that is put on the table in France. Except in the larger towns, butter is never seen. The bread throughout Spain, though it is, I think, too white to be nourishing, is very good. In tourist places they will thrust upon you imitation French rolls : it is thought to give a tone to the place ; but Spanish bread is always forthcoming, and it is a sure road to the waiter’s goodwill to ask for it. Nothing pleases a Spaniard more than to hear a foreigner praise something essentially Spanish. In some places, out of the beaten track, coffee, brandy and a cigar are included in the price of the meal. This is particularly the case in quiet places in the north, where Spaniards are wont to spend their summer holidays.

Pamplona is more picturesque without the walls than within, though it is a fascinating place, having withstood more sieges than any other city in Europe. The most interesting “sights” in Pamplona is the Cathedral and the cloisters founded by Charles III of Navarre in 1397. It was at the Siege of Pamplona, after his victory

The Spanish Pyrenees

at Vitoria, that Wellington entered on the final stage of the Peninsular War.

Pamplona will be found a good centre from which to explore Navarre, and it is the starting point of a line of motor chars-à-bancs to France. Away out on the road that leads to Tudela and the valley of the Ebro lies a place far more picturesque than Pamplona, the beautiful ruined castle of Olite. In the cobbled lanes of Olite one may reconstruct the history of the old frontier Province, for the castle of Olite was the chief residence of the Navarrese Court.



Centre Excursionista

THE CRAGS AND VILLAGE OF RIGLOS

de Catalunya

This is one of the curiosities of the eastern extremity of the Spanish Pyrenees in Catalonia. Spread out at the foot of the village are extensive olive groves.

CHAPTER XI

The Southern Slopes—The Siege of Zaragoza—Jaca—
Huesca—Lèrida—Manesa—Monastery of Montserrat
—Barcelona—Gerona—San Pol de Mar—Rosas Bay
—Bou

PANTICOSA, Venasque, and Seo de Urgel are the three best starting points for the vagabond who would learn something of the charm of the Spanish Pyrenees. From Panticosa I once made a wonderful voyage of discovery among the many beautiful little lakes up near the frontier. I have also climbed over into the Ara Valley and slept out near Bujaruelo, on my way across to France. On most of the southern slopes one generally finds some beautiful pine plantations. And one never forgets the gleam of the torrents as one comes suddenly upon them out of the gloom of the pine woods. Though one may have had the music of the torrents in one's ears for some time, there is always a feeling of surprise upon beholding the swift silver sheen of the water and the rhythm of the waving ferns. Trout are rare on this side of the Pyrenees, for many of the streams flowing into the Mediterranean are really only torrents running almost dry in summer. Very beautiful are the butterflies that flit to and fro across the bracken-clad banks, while gaudy, elusive dragonflies hover over the stream. In

Zaragoza

the middle of the torrent one finds great round boulders with a thick coat of velvet moss. Rare ferns and aquatic plants line the banks.

In the pine plantations one will often happen upon a forest guard collecting resin from the tiny red pots hung on the trees as in the Landes. Cork woods are by no means rare on the Spanish side of the central Pyrenees, the red trunks stripped of their bark making a note of dull colour against the green of the hill-side. Sheltered from a deal of the wind and warmed by the southern sunshine the wild flowers and plants, rhododendrons, asphodel, and Alpine gentians make travel in the upper valleys an experience not easily forgotten.

In spite of their dirt, lack of comfort, and ill-cooked meals there is a fascination about the *ventas* and *fondas* of Spain that one seldom finds in the more luxurious *auberges* and *hôtels* of the French Pyrenees. Aragonese and Catalans still display a certain amount of national costume, if it be but a gaudy scarf, a black lace *mantilla*, or broad-brimmed, high-crowned *sombrero*. A wealth of local colour is supplied by the animals, strings of jangling mules, sturdy donkeys, herds of goats in charge of hinds as shaggy as their flocks.

Watch towers and loop-holed farm-houses testify to the ferocity of the Carlist Wars, though the old animosity has almost died out. Most of the hot-headed warriors who survived the last Carlist War have emigrated and their sons are now law-abiding subjects of Latin America.

Many of the village churches contain works

Zaragoza

of art worthy of attention, a carved cross or an ancient picture or statue of the Virgin. Very picturesque are the arcaded streets of the hill towns with low, rounded arches, thronged with citizens wrapped in their velvet lined *capas* like actors in a melodrama.

Here on the sun-kissed slopes of this mighty mountain range, looking south towards Morocco and the Sahara, the romantic may yet find an oasis free from the thralldom of dress clothes and *tables d'hôte*.

Pleasantly situated in one of the most fertile parts of the Ebro valley, Zaragoza, even in this age of rapid travel, will hold the visitor to Spain with its wealth of character and local colour. Zaragoza is the exact counterpart of Toulouse: both are capitals of the Pyrenees, both are situated in the plain at the base of the range, both are built on the bank of a great river. Zaragoza, or Saragossa, as it is more often spelt in English, is seen from afar off as one approaches it across a great brown wilderness of stones. Although in Northern Spain, Zaragoza might be at the foot of the Atlas Mountains. For hundreds of miles this great desert of brown rocks stretches beyond Soria and Seguenza to the head-waters of the Tagus, almost to the gates of Madrid. But Zaragoza is relieved from this great brown Spanish Sahara by the sluggish, yellow Ebro, an uninviting turgid stream, nevertheless, a river. The African aspect is enhanced by the Oriental minarets of La Seo, El Pilar, La Lonja and the Torre Nueva. Without doubt Zaragoza bears

Zaragoza

out the saying that Africa begins at the Pyrenees ; even at Granada one will not find in the inhabitants greater traces of the Berber occupation of Spain than in this capital of Aragon. A stubborn stiff-necked race of pastoral philosophers are the Aragonese, as distinct from the Basques as are the Japanese from the Chinese.

The history of Zaragoza is a succession of sieges, it claims to have been founded by Noah's nephew Tubal. In A.D. 777, the Sheik Suleyman ben Alarabi sent Cassim ben Yusuf to beg the help of Charlemagne against the Berbers under Tarik. Charlemagne, with his eye on Spanish territorial acquisitions, responded, was beaten back into France by the Berbers, and suffered the rear-guard defeat under Roland at Roncevalles. When Ferdinand II married Isabella of Castile, Aragon was joined to the Castilles, and modern Spain came into being. In the Peninsular War Zaragoza was twice besieged, first in 1808 when the French General Lefebvre-Desnouettes was obliged to withdraw his troops after continuous assaults from June 15th till August 15th. (Lefebvre-Desnouettes was drowned in a shipwreck in 1822.) The French never got further than the Convent of Santa Engracia, thanks to the defence organized by the stubborn Aragonese under a peasant leader, Tio Jorge, or Uncle George. The second siege began on December 20th of the same year. This time the French brought up 18,000 men with siege artillery, directed by Marshals Moncey, Mortier (Duc de Trévis), Junot (Duc d'Abrantès) and Lannes



Photo

PLOUGHING WITH OXEN IN THE EASTERN PYRENEES

Bacar Terra

Zaragoza

(Duc de Montebello). It was of Lannes, who was in command, that Napoleon said "I found him a dwarf, I left him a giant. He had great experience of war having been in fifty-four battles and three hundred combats. Though often violent he was much attached to me." The defence was directed by Tio Jorge, ably assisted by Agustina "La Artillera," a beautiful girl of twenty-two who fought side by side with her gunner-lover until he was killed, when she served the gun alone. In spite of the most desperate efforts of Tio Jorge and Agustina "La Artillera," starvation overcame the city and Zaragoza surrendered on February 20th, 1809, to Marshal Lannes after a most gallant defence of sixty-two days.

La Seo, the cathedral founded in 290 under St. Valerio, was turned into a mosque by the Berbers until 1119, when it was reconsecrated. The cathedral of El Pilar owes its origin to the following legend. In A.D. 40 the Apostle St. James came to preach the Gospel in Spain. While he was asleep, at Zaragoza, the Virgin appeared to him standing on a jasper pillar in the midst of angels, and asked for a church to be built on this very spot. Santiago at once built a chapel. The present building, however, was erected from plans by Herrera el Mozo in 1686. The Torre Nueva was built in 1504 and is slightly inclined like the Tower of Pisa.

As from Toulouse on the French side of the range the Pyrenees can be well explored with Zaragoza as a base. Barbastro, Huesca and

Montserrat

Jaca being the advance bases. The latter, with ancient houses decorated with beautiful wrought-iron balconies and railings, a Gothic cathedral, and a sixteenth-century Casa Consistoral is situated in a well-cultivated valley at the foot of the mountains. Jaca is a Pyrenean cross roads: one cannot miss it if one wanders on the sunny slopes of the Spanish Pyrenees. At Huesca one will find an interesting cathedral, but there is little to hold one at Barbastro, it is a place one passes through in one's wanderings.

On the way from Zaragoza to Barcelona one will find Caspé, a quaint brown town of towers and turrets, rising above the yellow waters of the Ebro.

In Catalonia, Lerida, crowns a hill above the Segré, there are more towers and turrets than at Caspé and the river is swifter. It has many delightful houses for the sketch-book. Another curious Catalan town is Manresa, a riverside place of ancient houses, with a beautiful view of the serrated mountains of Montserrat; near by are the salt mines of Cardona. We are now close to the Mediterranean, and the silver green of the olive groves makes a welcome change from the beech, box, and pines of the Pyrenees. From Manresa one proceeds to Monistrol and takes the rack and pinion railway up to Montserrat. The *Mons Serratus* or "jagged mountain" is like a saw and reminds one of the average schoolmaster's attempt to draw the Sierra Nevada on the black-board when the annual ten minutes are devoted to the geography of Spain and Portugal. Some

Manresa

of the teeth of the saw attain nearly 4000 feet. A delicate dove-grey is the usual colour of the Montserrat. The upper pinnacles above the pine belt are often dyed purple in the warm glow of the setting sun. As befits one of the most celebrated shrines the Montserrat has a legend. The ebony statue of the Virgin was carved by Saint Luke and brought to a cave on the Jagged Mountain by Saint Peter. The Bishop of Barcelona endeavoured to hide the statue from the Moors at Manresa but could not carry it away from the mountain. Finally it remained on the mountain, after working many miracles in which are involved the Devil, Guarin a hermit, and Riquilda, the beautiful daughter of Count Wilfrid of Barcelona. One is still shown the little black statue in the chapel of the monastery. Thousands of pilgrims make the journey up the Jagged Mountain every year, and hostels are available with rooms and meals for three categories of visitors. I have seen many monasteries and shrines in many lands and I do not know of any which made such an impression as that of Montserrat. The crenellated peaks shrouded in blue haze, and the singing of Catalan choirs are among many pleasant memories. But most beautiful of all is the monks' balcony. A little cypress avenue leads to this retreat of the monks whence one can follow the river flowing through a brown valley from old-world Manresa of the arcades. Brown is the land and the monastery is in keeping with the landscape. The life of a hermit in one of the rock cells scattered about the Jagged

Barcelona

Mountain can have been no unpleasant one, with all the country to read like a map at one's feet. The monks had a snug retreat, and one can imagine with what anger and despair they saw, one morning, the French troops marching up from the valley.

Though not the capital, Barcelona is the greatest city in Spain numerically, and it stands to the Spanish Pyrenees as does Bordeaux to the French Pyrenees ; but it is near enough to the range to be of the Pyrenees in a way that Bordeaux is not. One of the three great ports of the Mediterranean (Barcelona, Genoa and Marseilles), the Catalan city has many traditions of the Latin Lake where she once rivalled the Republics of Venice and Genoa. The capital of Catalonia, Barcelona of recent years has led a turbulent existence, being the centre of many separatist and anarchist plots. At either end of the Pyrenees we find the great ports of Bilbao and Barcelona, the Basques and Catalans, the workers of Spain. From its geographical position Barcelona has prospered more than Bilbao for, with all the Mediterranean at its door, the city looks back with pride on the traditions of antiquity ; it has more than a veneer of the culture and civilisation of the ancient Greeks. Barcelona is refined, and the Catalans possess a literature of their own like that of Provence. But unlike the Provençal patriots they are not content to live in the glorious past, they are innovators in art and architecture and have ideas, often very sound ideas, of their own. Both Basques and

Barcelona

Catalans are possessed of great courage and unflagging energy and this places them in the van of Modern Spain.

Unless one had been told, one would take a good deal of time to find out that Barcelona is a great seaport, for nothing of ships or the sea can be seen from the streets. Nor would one imagine that Barcelona is the Manchester of Spain, for all its commercial element seems to be kept well without the city walls. The present cathedral was begun in 1298 and finished in 1448, on the site of a former building used as a mosque by the Moors. In style it is Catalan-Gothic, a curious feature being the cloisters planted with orange trees and palms with a fountain in the middle and geese on the grass. The crypt under the high-altar contains the sepulchre of Santa Eulalia. In the cloisters is the tomb of Mossen Borra, the court jester of King Alfonso V of Aragon.

Above the town the great Fortress of Montjuich frowns down on all evil doers. Though its cannon have quelled many a revolt, for Barcelona was always a turbulent city, Montjuich in spite of its commanding position, is by no means impregnable, having been captured by Lord Peterborough in 1705, and by the French during the Peninsular War. On the opposite side of Barcelona the hill of Tibidabo rises to an altitude of 1745 feet. From a restaurant on this height one enjoys an admirable view, not only of Barcelona and the distant mountains but of the great blue expanse of the Mediterranean. One

Barcelona

watches steamers arriving from the Balearic Isles, or from Marseilles, Genoa and Naples, and at last one realises that Barcelona is a great port. At first but a smirch of black smoke on the horizon, the steamers soon take shape in the clear southern atmosphere. One sees many sailing vessels off Barcelona, lateen-rigged trawlers fishing in pairs, towing a trawl between two boats in what is called right through the Mediterranean in various Latin tongues, "ox fashion," for, like a yoke of oxen, it takes two boats to draw the net over the rough surface of the Mediterranean floor. Many beautiful little schooners built and manned in the Balearic Islands sail in and out of Barcelona with fruit. True to the old traditions of Columbus, Barcelona has a sporting yacht club with headquarters in a well-equipped floating club house in the harbour.

But the beauty of Barcelona lies in her spacious avenues. It is April, the sun is shining in romantic Spain. Let us take a stroll down the Rambla, the most beautiful street in southern Europe, the Nevski Prospekt of Spain. If it is Sunday we shall see the yellow-clad *picadores* riding to the bull-fight, and a gay crowd in cars, cabs, or carriages, for nobody would dream of walking to a bull-fight, even if he lived next door to the bull-ring. On ordinary days we saunter down between stalls piled high with sweet-scented flowers, a mass of colour and a cloud of perfume. In close proximity to the flower stalls and adding to the kaleidoscope of colour is the bird market where one can purchase feathered friends of all

Gerona

descriptions, from linguistic parrots screaming forecastle oaths in many languages to exotic tom-tits. All Barcelona throngs the Rambla, night and day. Here, one can study many types of Mediterranean people in addition to seeing all Barcelona and his wife. Facing the harbour, or rather the open sea as a navigator should, stands the Christopher Columbus Column, a fitting termination to a great highway. Though it is typical of life at Barcelona, the Rambla is by no means typical of Spain, and still less of the Spanish Pyrenees.

Travelling from Barcelona towards the French frontier a halt should be made to admire Gerona. This Catalan town is as brave as it is picturesque, for in 1809 it was defended by a small Spanish garrison and some English volunteers against thirty-five thousand French troops. From the stone bridge of Gerona one has one of the most fascinating views in the Spanish Pyrenees. The houses rise up sheer from the river Oña and are hung with crazy wooded balconies; crowning all is the very Iberian cathedral. The cathedral cloisters and the church of San Pedro are typical of old Spain.

One of the most picturesque fishing villages in this part of Spain is San Pol de Mar, all white houses with red roofs, quaint boats, fishers in red Catalan caps and the blue Mediterranean sea. Rosas Bay, providing shelter for storm-bound vessels, played a great part in the days of the wooden walls of Old England and figures in some of the most interesting pages of Captain

Rosas Bay

Marryat. No sailor, except perhaps his disciple Conrad, has ever written such wonderful descriptions of seafaring on the Mediterranean as Captain Marryat. So sure a harbour of refuge is Rosas Bay that it was known to the ancient mariners, and the Greeks built a town on the shores of the Bay which they called Emporion.

Figueras and the tower of Llansa church bring us to Cape Creus bathed in the sunlit waves of the Middle Sea. From Port Bou, the last station in Spain, one passes into France and falls once more under the spell of the snowy Canigou, having passed the *carabineros* and *douaniers*. We are back at Cerbère once more, for we have not only crossed and re-crossed the range but have actually circumnavigated the Pyrenees.

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